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FACT AND FICTION

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FOREWORD

EVERYONE wants facts, and everyone needs fiction. Facts are the basis of our own experience, fiction throws light on the experience of others. Together they form a perfect blend of information.

This holds good for the child as for the adult. Genuine facts alone can satisfy the eternal "What?" "How?" and "Why?" familiar to every parent. The facts necessary to the child are, of course, those that inform him first about his own immediate surroundings, and then about things farther removed,—other countries, other times. Outside these, however, lies the wide half-charted sea of life—the unpredictable actions of men, the secret springs of action, character, emotion. Since these do, in truth, comprise the larger part of experience, the child soon becomes interested, as it is desirable he should. These things are the stuff of fiction, for fiction interprets character and sheds light on the hidden workings of other minds. In fiction's mirror, the child reads his own nature, and thus cultivates self-knowledge, imagination, tolerance. Fiction educates the feelings, as the sciences and other studies educate the mind.

Considered singly, each has been roundly condemned. "What I want," Dickens makes Mr. Gradgrind say in *Hard Times*, "is Facts. Teach these boys nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life." Mr. Squeers, in *Nicholas Nickleby*, was of the same mind; though the facts he taught were not even useful, except to himself. Matthew Arnold, in no

FOREWORD

less emphatic terms but with finer irony, states a similar opinion through the medium of his modern schoolmaster, Archimedes Silverpump, Ph D , and his admiring pupil, Bottles " Useful languages," says Archimedes, " living languages, and the forming of the mind through observation and experiment, these are the fundamental articles of my educational creed " And Bottles supplied the comment, " Original man, Silverpump ! fine mind ! fine system ! None of your antiquated rubbish—all practical work—latest discoveries in science—mind constantly kept excited—lots of interesting experiments—lights of all colours—fizz ! fizz ! bang ! bang ! That's what I call forming a man " It is, indeed, generally agreed that fact alone produces that narrow type of practical man thus caricatured by Dickens and Arnold Where one ought to find imagination, open-mindedness, tact, and sympathy, there is instead an unfinished quality, an uncultured spirit.

We know only too well how, in the same way, fiction alone, whether in the form of novel, drama, talkie, newspaper serial, or penny dreadful, is equally unsatisfactory as an educative influence. It becomes a kind of escape from more serious and practical problems, and often only a romantic drug which renders the addict unfit for common life

To complete the unfinished character moulded by facts, and the drug-addict shaped by fiction, is the task of true education From the time a boy or girl goes to school until they leave, fact and fiction should be suitably mingled Especially is this required at the time when the pupil begins to grow from childhood to youth, when the mind is beginning to awaken to new wonders and the world For then, more than at any other age, the desire is for experience—fact and fiction together—and for all experience. It is the desire of Ulysses, the eternal youth, for whom, as he says,

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“ All experience is an arch wherethro’
Gleams that untravell’d world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.”

This is a healthy and natural desire, to be as fully satisfied as possible, and not suppressed or thwarted, as it so often is, by grudging information or by diverting it along dull and unattractive by-paths. It is a desire that should be satisfied, as it demands to be, by exploring a field of interests as wide as life itself.

This anthology attempts to do something towards presenting fact and fiction together, with material drawn from a number of widely divergent aspects of life. If, by this means, some spark of curiosity is aroused, to grow in time into a permanent flame, or some seed of appreciation of nature and character implanted, there is a fair prospect that the youthful reader will have set foot on the track of Ulysses, and will travel through the world of new and varied experience which awaits the eager and curious, and that, while always “roaming with a hungry heart,” he or she will continually discover renewed satisfaction.

A S C

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MYTH AND FABLE

THE ARGONAUTS

"BUT you know not," said Medeia, "what he must do who would win the fleece. He must tame the two brazen-footed bulls, who breathe devouring flame, and with them he must plough ere nightfall four acres in the field of Ares; and he must sow them with serpents' teeth, of which each tooth springs up into an armed man. Then he must fight with all those warriors; and little will it profit him to conquer them, for the fleece is guarded by a serpent, more huge than any mountain pine, and over his body you must step if you would reach the golden fleece."

Then Jason laughed bitterly. "Unjustly is that fleece kept here, and by an unjust and lawless king; and unjustly shall I die in my youth, for I will attempt it ere another sun be set."

Then Medeia trembled, and said, "No mortal man can reach that fleece unless I guide him through. For round it, beyond the river, is a wall full nine ells high, with lofty towers and buttresses, and mighty gates of threefold brass, and over the gates the wall is arched, with golden battlements above. And over the gateway sits Brimo, the wild witch-huntress of the woods, brandishing a pine-torch in her hands, while her mad hounds howl around. No man dare meet her or look on her, but only I her priestess, and she watches far and wide lest any stranger should come near."

"No wall so high but it may be climbed at last,

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and no wood so thick but it may be crawled through ; no serpent so wary but he may be charmed, or witch-queen so fierce but spells may soothe her , and I may yet win the golden fleece, if a wise maiden help bold men ”

And he looked at Medeia cunningly, and held her with his glittering eye, till she blushed and trembled, and said—

“ Who can face the fire of the bulls’ breath, and fight ten thousand armed men ? ”

“ He whom you help,” said Jason, flattering her, “ for your fame is spread over all the earth Are you not the queen of all enchantresses, wiser even than your sister Circe, in her fairy island in the West ? ”

“ Would that I were with my sister Circe in her fairy island in the West, far away from sore temptation and thoughts which tear the heart ! But if it must be so—for why should you die ?—I have an ointment here , I made it from the magic ice-flower which sprang from Prometheus’ wound, above the clouds on Caucasus, in the dreary fields of snow. Anoint yourself with that, and you shall have in you seven men’s strength ; and anoint your shield with it, and neither fire nor sword can harm you. But what you begin you must end before sunset, for its virtue lasts only one day. And anoint your helmet with it before you sow the serpents’ teeth , and when the sons of earth spring up, cast your helmet among their ranks, and the deadly crop of the War-god’s field will mow itself, and perish.”

Then Jason fell on his knees before her, and thanked her and kissed her hands ; and she gave him the vase of ointment, and fled trembling through the reeds. And Jason told his comrades what had happened, and showed them the box of ointment ; and all rejoiced but Idas, and he grew mad with envy.

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And at sunrise Jason went and bathed, and anointed himself from head to foot, and his shield, and his helmet, and his weapons, and bade his comrades try the spell. So they tried to bend his lance, but it stood like an iron bar ; and Idas in spite hewed at it with his sword, but the blade flew to splinters in his face. Then they hurled their lances at his shield, but the spear-points turned like lead ; and Caeneus tried to throw him, but he never stirred a foot , and Polydeuces struck him with his fist a blow which would have killed an ox, but Jason only smiled, and the heroes danced about him with delight ; and he leapt, and ran, and shouted in the joy of that enormous strength, till the sun rose, and it was time to go and to claim Aietes' promise.

So he sent up Telamon and Aithalides to tell Aietes that he was ready for the fight ; and they went up among the marble walls, and beneath the roofs of gold, and stood in Aietes' hall, while he grew pale with rage

" Fulfil your promise to us, child of the blazing Sun. Give us the serpents' teeth, and let loose the fiery bulls , for we have found a champion among us who can win the golden fleece "

And Aietes bit his lips, for he fancied that they had fled away by night : but he could not go back from his promise ; so he gave them the serpents' teeth.

Then he called for his chariot and his horses, and sent heralds through all the town , and all the people went out with him to the dreadful War-god's field

And there Aietes sat upon his throne, with his warriors on each hand, thousands and tens of thousands, clothed from head to foot in steel chain-mail. And the people and the women crowded to every window and bank and wall ; while the Minuæ stood

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together, a mere handful in the midst of that great host.

And Chalciope was there and Argus, trembling, and Medeia, wrapped closely in her veil ; but Aietes did not know that she was muttering cunning spells between her lips

Then Jason cried, " Fulfil your promise, and let your fiery bulls come forth."

Then Aietes bade open the gates, and the magic bulls leapt out Their brazen hoofs rang upon the ground, and their nostrils sent out sheets of flame, as they rushed with lowered heads upon Jason , but he never flinched a step. The flame of their breath swept round him, but it singed not a hair of his head ; and the bulls stopped short and trembled when Medeia began her spell.

Then Jason sprang upon the nearest and seized him by the horn ; and up and down they wrestled, till the bull fell grovelling on his knees ; for the heart of the brute died within him, and his mighty limbs were loosed, beneath the steadfast eye of that dark witch-maiden and the magic whisper of her lips

So both the bulls were tamed and yoked , and Jason bound them to the plough, and goaded them onward with his lance till he had ploughed the sacred field.

And all the Minuæi shouted , but Aietes bit his lips with rage, for the half of Jason's work was over, and the sun was yet high in heaven

Then he took the serpents' teeth and sowed them, and waited what would befall But Medeia looked at him and at his helmet, lest he should forget the lesson she had taught

And every furrow heaved and bubbled, and out of every clod arose a man. Out of the earth they rose by thousands, each clad from head to foot in steel, and drew their swords and rushed on Jason, where he stood in the midst alone

THE ARGONAUTS

Then the Minuai grew pale with fear for him ; but Aietes laughed a bitter laugh " See ! if I had not warriors enough already round me, I could call them out of the bosom of the earth."

But Jason snatched off his helmet, and hurled it into the thickest of the throng. And blind madness came upon them, suspicion, hate, and fear ; and one cried to his fellow, " Thou didst strike me ! " and another, " Thou art Jason ; thou shalt die ! " So fury seized those earth-born phantoms, and each turned his hand against the rest , and they fought and were never weary, till they all lay dead upon the ground. Then the magic furrows opened, and the kind earth took them home into her breast , and the grass grew up all green again above them, and Jason's work was done

Then the Minuai rose and shouted, till Prometheus heard them from his crag. And Jason cried, " Lead me to the fleece this moment, before the sun goes down "

But Aietes thought, " He has conquered the bulls, and sown and reaped the deadly crop. Who is this who is proof against all magic ? He may kill the serpent yet " So he delayed, and sat taking counsel with his princes till the sun went down and all was dark. Then he bade a herald cry, " Every man to his home for to-night. To-morrow we will meet these heroes, and speak about the golden fleece "

Then he turned and looked at Medeia. " This is your doing, false witch-maid ! You have helped these yellow-haired strangers, and brought shame upon your father and yourself ! "

Medeia shrank and trembled, and her face grew pale with fear , and Aietes knew that she was guilty, and whispered, " If they win the fleece, you die ! "

But the Minuai marched toward their ship, growling like lions cheated of their prey ; for they saw that

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Aietes meant to mock them, and to cheat them out of all their toil. And Oileus said, "Let us go to the grove together, and take the fleece by force."

And Idas the rash cried, "Let us draw lots who shall go in first, for, while the dragon is devouring one, the rest can slay him and carry off the fleece in peace." But Jason held them back, though he praised them; for he hoped for Medeia's help.

And after a while Medeia came trembling, and wept a long while before she spoke. And at last—

"My end is come, and I must die; for my father has found out that I have helped you. You he would kill if he dared, but he will not harm you, because you have been his guests. Go then, go, and remember poor Medeia when you are far away across the sea." But all the heroes cried—

"If you die, we die with you; for without you we cannot win the fleece, and home we will not go without it, but fall here fighting to the last man."

"You need not die," said Jason. "Flee home with us across the sea. Show us first how to win the fleece, for you can do it. Why else are you the priestess of the grove? Show us but how to win the fleece, and come with us, and you shall be my queen, and rule over the rich princes of the Minuæ, in Iolcos by the sea."

And all the heroes pressed round, and vowed to her that she should be their queen.

Medeia wept, and shuddered, and hid her face in her hands, for her heart yearned after her sisters and her playfellows, and the home where she was brought up as a child. But at last she looked up at Jason, and spoke between her sobs—

"Must I leave my home and my people, to wander with strangers across the sea? The lot is cast, and I must endure it. I will show you how to win the golden fleece. Bring up your ship to the wood-side,

THE ARGONAUTS

and moor her there against the bank ; and let Jason come up at midnight, and one brave comrade with him, and meet me beneath the wall ”

Then all the heroes cried together, “ I will go ! ” “ and I ! ” “ and I ! ” And Idas the rash grew mad with envy ; for he longed to be foremost in all things But Medeia calmed them, and said, “ Orpheus shall go with Jason, and bring his magic harp ; for I hear of him that he is the king of all minstrels, and can charm all things on earth ”

And Orpheus laughed for joy, and clapped his hands, because the choice had fallen on him ; for in those days poets and singers were as bold warriors as the best.

So at midnight they went up the bank, and found Medeia ; and beside came Absyrtus, her young brother, leading a yearling lamb.

Then Medeia brought them to a thicket beside the War-god's gate , and there she bade Jason dig a ditch, and kill the lamb, and leave it there, and strew on it magic herbs and honey from the honey-comb

Then sprang up through the earth, with the red fire flashing before her, Brimo the wild witch-huntress, while her mad hounds howled around. She had one head like a horse's, and another like a ravening hound's, and another like a hissing snake's, and a sword in either hand And she leapt into the ditch with her hounds, and they ate and drank their fill, while Jason and Orpheus trembled, and Medeia hid her eyes And at last the witch-queen vanished, and fled with her hounds into the woods : and the bars of the gates fell down, and the brazen doors flew wide, and Medeia and the heroes ran forward and hurried through the poison wood, among the dark stems of the mighty beeches, guided by the gleam of the golden fleece, until they saw it

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hanging on one vast tree in the midst. And Jason would have sprung to seize it ; but Medeia held him back, and pointed, shuddering, to the tree-foot, where the mighty serpent lay, coiled in and out among the roots, with a body like a mountain pine. His coils stretched many a fathom, spangled with bronze and gold , and half of him they could see, but no more, for the rest lay in the darkness far beyond.

And when he saw them coming he lifted up his head, and watched them with his small bright eyes, and flashed his forked tongue, and roared like the fire among the woodlands, till the forest tossed and groaned. For his cries shook the trees from leaf to root, and swept over the long reaches of the river, and over Aietes' hall, and woke the sleepers in the city, till mothers clasped their children in their fear.

But Medeia called gently to him, and he stretched out his long spotted neck, and licked her hand, and looked up in her face, as if to ask for food. Then she made a sign to Orpheus, and he began his magic song

And as he sang, the forest grew calm again, and the leaves on every tree hung still , and the serpent's head sank down, and his brazen coils grew limp, and his glittering eyes closed lazily, till he breathed as gently as a child, while Orpheus called to pleasant Slumber, who gives peace to men, and beasts, and waves.

Then Jason leapt forward warily, and stept across that mighty snake, and tore the fleece from off the tree-trunk ; and the four rushed down the garden, to the bank where the *Argo* lay.

There was a silence for a moment, while Jason held the golden fleece on high. Then he cried, " Go now, good *Argo*, swift and steady, if ever you would see Pelion more "

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

And she went, as the heroes drove her, grim and silent all, with muffled oars, till the pine-wood bent like willow in their hands, and stout *Argo* groaned beneath their strokes

On and on, beneath the dewy darkness, they fled swiftly down the swirling stream, underneath black walls, and temples, and the castles of the princes of the East, past sluice-mouths, and fragrant gardens, and groves of all strange fruits; past marshes where fat kine lay sleeping, and long beds of whispering reeds, till they heard the merry music of the surge upon the bar, as it tumbled in the moonlight all alone

Into the surge they rushed, and *Argo* leapt the breakers like a horse, for she knew the time was come to show her mettle, and win honour for the heroes and herself

Into the surge they rushed, and *Argo* leapt the breakers like a horse, till the heroes stopped all panting, each man upon his oar, as she slid into the still broad sea

Then Orpheus took his harp and sang a paean, till the heroes' hearts rose high again, and they rowed on stoutly and steadfastly, away into the darkness of the West.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

IN the pleasant valleys of a country which was called Thessaly there lived a man whose name was Orpheus. Every day he made soft music with his golden harp, and sang beautiful songs such as no one had ever heard before. And whenever Orpheus sang, then everything came to listen to him. It was strange to watch the beasts that came and stood all round him. The cows came, and the sheep, and

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dogs, and horses, and with them came the bears and wolves ; but they did not hurt the cows and sheep, for they forgot their old cruel ways as they heard the songs of Orpheus. The high hills listened to him also, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear ; and I think that even the clouds sailed along more gently and brightly in the sky when he sang, and the stream which ran close to his feet made a softer noise, to show how glad his music made it.

And Orpheus had a wife who was called Eurydice, whom he loved very dearly. All through the winter when the snow was on the hills, and all through the summer when the sunshine made everything beautiful, Orpheus used to sing to her his pretty songs , and Eurydice sat on the grass by his side, while the beasts came round to listen, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear him.

But one day, when Eurydice was playing with some children on the bank of the river, she trod upon a snake in the long grass, and the snake bit her. And by and by she began to be very sick, and Eurydice knew that she must die. So she told the children to go to Orpheus (for he was far away) and say how sorry she was to leave him, and that she loved him always very dearly . and then Eurydice put her head down upon the soft grass, and fell asleep and died. You cannot think how sad Orpheus was when the children came to tell him that Eurydice was dead. He felt so wretched that he never played upon his golden harp, and he never opened his lips to sing, and the beasts that used to listen to him wondered why Orpheus sat all alone on the green bank where Eurydice used to sit with him, and why it was that he never made any more of his beautiful music. All day long he sat there, and very often his cheeks were wet with his tears. And at last he said, " I cannot stay here any more ; I must go and look for

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Eurydice I cannot bear to be without her, and perhaps the king of the land where people go after they are dead will let her come back and live with me again."

So he took his harp in his hand, and went to look for Eurydice in the land which is far away, where the sun goes down into his golden cup before the night comes on. And he went on and on a very long way, and at last he came to a high and dark gateway. It was barred across with iron bars, and it was bolted and locked so that nobody could open it. It was a wretched and gloomy place, because the sunshine never came there, and it was covered with clouds and mist. And in front of this great gateway there sat a monstrous dog, with three heads, and six eyes, and three tongues, and everything was dark around, except his eyes, which shone like fire, and which saw everyone that dared to come near. Now when Orpheus came looking for Eurydice, the dog raised his three heads, and opened his three mouths, and gnashed his teeth at him, and roared terribly, but when Orpheus came nearer, the dog jumped up upon his feet and got himself ready to fly at him and tear him to pieces. And what do you think that Orpheus did? Why, he said nothing; only he took down his harp and began to play upon its golden strings. And the dog Cerberus (for that was his name) growled and snarled and showed the great white teeth which were in his three mouths, but he could not help hearing the sweet music, and he wondered why it was that he did not wish any more to tear Orpheus in pieces. Very soon the music made him quiet and still, and at last it lulled him to sleep; and you could only tell by his heavy breathing and snoring that there was any dog there. So when Cerberus had gone to sleep, Orpheus passed by him and came up to the gate, and (was it not

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wonderful ?) he found the gate wide open, for it had come open of its own accord while he was singing. And he was glad when he saw this, for he thought that now he should see Eurydice.

So he went on and on a long way, until he came to the palace of the king ; and there were guards placed before the door who tried to keep him from going in, but Orpheus played upon his harp, and then they could not help letting him go

So he went into the great hall, where he saw the king and queen sitting on a throne , and as Orpheus came near, the king called out to him with a loud and terrible voice, " Who are you, and how dare you to come here ? Do you not know that no one is allowed to come here till after they are dead ? I will have you tied up with iron chains, and you shall be placed in a dungeon, from which you will never be able to get out." And what do you think that Orpheus did ? Why, he said nothing but he took his golden harp in his hand, and began to sing more sweetly and gently than ever, because he knew that, if he liked to do so, the king could let him see Eurydice again. And as he sang, the faces of the king and queen began to look almost glad, and their rage and anger went away, and they began to feel how much happier it must be to be gentle and loving than to be angry and cruel. Then the king said, " O Orpheus, you have made me feel happy with your sweet music, although I have never felt happy before , and now tell me why you have come, because you must want something or other, for otherwise no one would come, before he was dead, to this sad and gloomy land of which I am the king " Then Orpheus said, " O king, give me back my dear Eurydice, and let her go from this gloomy place and live with me on the bright earth again." So the king said that she should go. And

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the king said to Orpheus, " I have given you what you wanted, because you sang so sweetly , and when you go back to the earth from this place, your wife whom you love so dearly shall go up behind you but remember that you must never look back until she has reached the earth, for if you do, Eurydice will be brought back here, and I shall not be able to give her to you again, even if you should sing more sweetly and gently than ever "

Now Orpheus was longing to see Eurydice, and he hoped that the king would let him see her at once , but when the king said that he must not try to see her till she had reached the earth, he was quite content, for he said, " Shall I not wait patiently a little while, that Eurydice may come and live with me again ? " So he promised the king that he would go up to the earth without stopping to look behind and see whether Eurydice was coming after him

Then Orpheus went away from the palace of the king, and he passed through the dark gateway, and the dog Cerberus did not bark or growl, for he remembered the music which he had made, and he knew that Orpheus would not have been allowed to come back if the king had not wished it So Orpheus went on and on a long way , and he became impatient, and longed more and more to see Eurydice And at last he came near to the earth, and he saw just a little streak of light, where the sun was going to rise from the sea , and presently the sky became brighter, and he saw everything before him so clearly that he could not help turning round to look at Eurydice. But, ah ! she had not yet *quite* reached the earth, and so now he lost her again He just saw something pale and white, which looked like his own dear wife, and he just heard a soft and gentle voice, which sounded like

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the voice of Eurydice, and then it all melted away. And still he thought that he saw that pale white face, and heard that soft and gentle voice, which said, "O Orpheus, Orpheus, why did you look back? How dearly I love you, and how glad I should have been to live with you again; but now I must go back, because you have broken your promise to the king, and I must not even kiss you, and say how much I love you."

And Orpheus sat down at the place where Eurydice was taken away from him; and he could not go on any further, because he felt so miserable there he stayed day after day, and his cheek became more pale, and his body weaker and weaker, till at last he knew that he must die. And Orpheus was not sorry; for although he loved the bright earth, with all its flowers, and soft grass, and sunny streams, he knew that he could not be with Eurydice again until he had left it. So at last he laid his head upon the earth, and fell asleep, and died. and then I think that he and Eurydice saw each other in the land which is far away, where the sun goes down at night into his golden cup, and were never parted again.

SIR G W Cox

ULYSSES AND THE CYCLOPES

COASTING on all that night by unknown and out-of-the-way shores, they came by daybreak to the land where the Cyclopes dwell, a sort of giant shepherds that neither sow nor plough, but the earth untilled produces for them rich wheat and barley and grapes, yet they have neither bread nor wine, nor know the arts of cultivation, nor care to know them, for they live each man to himself, without laws or government,

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or anything like a state or kingdom, but their dwellings are in caves, on the steep heads of mountains, every man's household governed by his own caprice, or not governed at all, their wives and children as lawless as themselves, none caring for others, but each doing as he or she thinks good. Ships or boats they have none, nor artificers to make them, no trade or commerce, or wish to visit other shores ; yet they have convenient places for harbours and for shipping. Here Ulysses with a chosen party of twelve followers landed to explore what sort of men dwelt there, whether hospitable and friendly to strangers, or altogether wild and savage, for as yet no dwellers appeared in sight

The first sign of habitation which they came to was a giant's cave, rudely fashioned, but of a size which betokened the vast proportions of its owner, the pillars which supported it being the bodies of huge oaks or pines, in the natural state of the tree, and all about showed more marks of strength and skill in whoever built it. Ulysses, entering in, admired the savage contrivances and artless structure of the place, and longed to see the tenant of so outlandish a mansion, but well conjecturing that gifts would have more avail in extracting courtesy than strength could succeed in forcing it, from such a one as he expected to find the inhabitant, he resolved to flatter his hospitality with a present of Greek wine, of which he had store in twelve great vessels, so strong that no one ever drank it without an infusion of twenty parts of water to one of wine, yet the fragrance of it even then so delicious, that it would have vexed a man who smelled it to abstain from tasting it ; but whoever tasted it, it was able to raise his courage to the height of heroic deeds

Taking with them a goatskin flagon full of this precious liquor, they ventured into the recesses of the

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cave Here they pleased themselves a whole day with beholding the giant's kitchen, where the flesh of sheep and goats lay strewed, his dairy where goat-milk stood ranged in troughs and pails, his pens where he kept his live animals ; but those he had driven forth to pasture with him when he went out in the morning While they were feasting their eyes with the sight of these curiosities, their ears were suddenly deafened with a noise like the falling of a house. It was the owner of the cave who had been abroad all day feeding his flock, as his custom was, in the mountains, and now drove them home in the evening from pasture He threw down a pile of fire-wood, which he had been gathering against supper time, before the mouth of the cave, which occasioned the crash they heard The Grecians hid themselves in the remote parts of the cave, at sight of the uncouth monster It was Polyphemus, the largest and savagest of the Cyclopes, who boasted himself to be the son of Neptune He looked more like a mountain crag than a man, and to his brutal body he had a brutish mind answerable. He drove his flock, all that gave milk, to the interior of the cave, but left the rams and the he-goats without Then taking up a stone so massy, that twenty oxen could not have drawn it, he placed it at the mouth of the cave, to defend the entrance, and sat him down to milk his ewes and his goats, which done, he lastly kindled a fire, and throwing his great eye round the cave (for the Cyclopes have no more than one eye, and that placed in the midst of their forehead), by the glimmering light he discerned some of Ulysses' men

"Ho, guests, what are you ? merchants or wandering thieves ?" he bellowed out in a voice which took from them all power to reply, it was so astounding

Only Ulysses summoned resolution to answer, that they came neither for plunder nor traffic, but were

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Grecians who had lost their way, returning from Troy ; which famous city, under the conduct of Agamemnon, the renowned son of Atreus, they had sacked, and laid level with the ground. Yet now they prostrated themselves humbly before his feet, whom they acknowledged to be mightier than they, and besought him that he would bestow the rites of hospitality upon them, for that Jove was the avenger of wrongs done to strangers, and would fiercely resent any injury which they might suffer

“ Fool,” said the Cyclops, “ to come so far to preach to me the fear of the gods We Cyclopes care not for your Jove, whom you fable to be nursed by a goat, nor any of your blessed ones We are stronger than they, and dare bid open battle to Jove himself, though you and all your fellows of the earth join with him ” And he bade them tell him where their ship was, in which they came, and whether they had any companions But Ulysses, with a wise caution, made answer, that they had no ship or companions, but were unfortunate men whom the sea, splitting their ship in pieces, had dashed upon his coast, and they alone had escaped. He replied nothing, but gripping two of the nearest of them, as if they had been no more than children, he dashed their brains out against the earth, and (shocking to relate) tore in pieces their limbs, and devoured them : for the Cyclopes are *man-eaters*, and esteem human flesh to be a delicacy far above goat’s or kid’s, though by reason of their abhorred customs few men approach their coast except some stragglers, or now and then a shipwrecked mariner At a sight so horrid, Ulysses and his men were like distracted people. He, when he had made an end of his wicked supper, drained a draught of goat’s milk down his prodigious throat, and lay down and slept among his goats Then Ulysses drew his sword, and half resolved to thrust it with all his might

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in at the bosom of the sleeping monster , but wiser thoughts restrained him, else they had there without help all perished, for none but Polyphemus himself could have removed that mass of stone which he had placed to guard the entrance So they were constrained to abide all that night in fear

When day came the Cyclops awoke, and kindling a fire, made his breakfast of two other of his unfortunate prisoners, then milked his goats as he was accustomed, and pushing aside the vast stone, and shutting it again when he had done, upon the prisoners, with as much ease as a man opens and shuts a quiver's lid, he let out his flock, and drove them before him with whistlings (as sharp as winds in storms) to the mountains

Then Ulysses, of whose strength and cunning the Cyclops seems to have had as little heed as of an infant's, being left alone, with the remnant of his men which the Cyclops had not devoured, gave manifest proof how far manly wisdom excels brutish force. He chose a stake from among the wood which the Cyclops had piled up for firing, in length and thickness like a mast, which he sharpened and hardened in the fire, and selected four men, and instructed them what they should do with this stake, and made them perfect in their parts

When the evening was come, the Cyclops drove home his sheep ; and as fortune directed it, either of purpose, or that his memory was overruled by the gods to his hurt (as in the issue is proved), he drove the males of his flock, contrary to his custom, along with the dams into the pens Then shutting-to the stone of the cave, he fell to his horrible supper When he had despatched two more of the Grecians, Ulysses waxed bold with the contemplation of his project, and took a bowl of Greek wine, and merrily dared the Cyclops to drink.

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"Cyclops," he said, "take a bowl of wine from the hand of your guest, it may serve to digest the man's flesh that you have eaten, and show what drink our ship held before it went down. All I ask in recompense, if you find it good, is to be dismissed in a whole skin. Truly you must look to have few visitors, if you observe this new custom of eating your guests."

The brute took and drank, and vehemently enjoyed the taste of wine, which was new to him, and swilled again at the flagon, and entreated for more, and prayed Ulysses to tell him his name, that he might bestow a gift upon the man who had given him such brave liquor. The Cyclopes (he said) had grapes, but this rich juice (he swore) was simply divine. Again Ulysses plied him with the wine, and the fool drank it as fast as he poured out, and again he asked the name of his benefactor, which Ulysses, cunningly dissembling, said - "My name is Noman, my kindred and friends in my own country call me Noman." "Then," said the Cyclops, "this is the kindness I will show thee, Noman, I will eat thee last of all thy friends." He had scarce expressed his savage kindness when the fumes of the strong wine overcame him, and he reeled down upon the floor and sank into a dead sleep.

Ulysses watched his time, while the monster lay insensible, and heartening up his men, they placed the sharp end of the stake in the fire till it was heated red-hot, and some god gave them a courage beyond that which they were used to have, and the four men with difficulty bored the sharp end of the huge stake, which they had heated red-hot, right into the eye of the drunken cannibal, and Ulysses helped to thrust it in with all his might.

He waking, roared with the pain so loud that all the cavern broke into claps like thunder. They fled,

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and dispersed into corners. He plucked the burning stake from his eye, and hurled the wood madly about the cave. Then he cried out with a mighty voice for his brethren the Cyclopes, that dwelt hard by in caverns upon hills, they hearing the terrible shout came flocking from all parts to inquire what ailed Polyphemus? and what cause he had for making such horrid clamours in the night-time to break their sleep? if his fright proceeded from any mortal? if strength or craft had given him his death's blow? He made answer from within that Noman had hurt him, Noman had killed him, Noman was with him in the cave. They replied, "If no man has hurt thee, and no man is with thee, then thou art alone, and the evil that afflicts thee is from the hand of heaven, which none can resist or help." So they left him and went their way, thinking that some disease troubled him. He, blind and ready to split with the anguish of the pain, went groaning up and down in the dark to find the doorway, which when he found, he removed the stone, and sat in the threshold, feeling if he could lay hold on any man going out with the sheep, which (the day now breaking) were beginning to issue forth to their accustomed pastures. But Ulysses, whose first artifice, in giving himself that ambiguous name, had succeeded so well with the Cyclops, was not of a wit so gross to be caught by that palpable device. But casting about in his mind all the ways which he could contrive for escape (no less than all their lives depending on the success), at last he thought of this expedient. He made knots of the osier twigs upon which the Cyclops commonly slept, with which he tied the fattest and fleeciest of the rams together, three in a rank, and under the belly of the middle ram he tied a man, and himself last, wrapping himself fast with both his hands in the rich wool of one, the fairest of the flock.

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And now the sheep began to issue forth very fast; the males went first, the females un milked stood by, bleating and requiring the hand of their shepherd in vain to milk them, their full bags sore with being un emptied, but he much sorer with the loss of sight. Still as the males passed, he felt the backs of those fleecy fools, never dreaming that they carried his enemies under their bellies . so they passed on till the last ram came loaded with his wool and Ulysses together. He stopped that ram and felt him, and had his hand once in the hair of Ulysses, yet knew it not, and he chid the ram for being last, and spoke to it as if it understood him, and asked it whether it did not wish that its master had his eye again, which that abominable Noman had put out, when they had got him down with wine ; and he willed the ram to tell him whereabouts in the cave his enemy lurked, that he might dash his brains and strew them about, to ease his heart of that tormenting revenge which rankled in it After a deal of such foolish talk to the beast he let it go

When Ulysses found himself free, he let go his hold, and assisted in disengaging his friends The rams which had befriended them they carried off with them to the ships, where their companions with tears in their eyes received them, as men escaped from death They plied their oars, and set their sails, and when they were got as far off from shore as a voice would reach, Ulysses cried out to the Cyclops - " Cyclops, thou should'st not have so much abused thy monstrous strength, as to devour thy guests Jove by my hand sends thee requital to pay thy savage inhumanity " The Cyclops heard, and came forth enraged, and in his anger he plucked a fragment of a rock, and threw it with blind fury at the ships it narrowly escaped lighting upon the bark in which Ulysses sat, but with the fall it raised so fierce an ebb, as bore back the

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ship till it almost touched the shore. "Cyclops," said Ulysses, "if any ask thee who imposed on thee that unsightly blemish in thine eye, say it was Ulysses, son of Laertes the king of Ithaca am I called, the waster of cities." Then they crowded sail, and beat the old sea, and forth they went with a forward gale

CHARLES LAMB

THE DEATH OF BALDUR

A CLOUD lay over Asgard Not in the sky, for the sun shone clear in the soft blue heaven, nor on the earth, for the flowers starred the meadows with their gay blossoms and birds sang in the whispering groves.

The gloom was in the hearts of the Æsir and Asynjar, for Baldur, their darling, the Shining God, was sad.

With clouded brow, bent head, and heavy step he paced the deepest paths of the forest, far from the light of day and, when the gods met in council, he sat apart in silence or lifted heavy eyes to them when they spoke, answering in fewest words

"What ails him? What can it be?" they whispered to each other, but no reply came until Frigga, unable to bear more, drew rein beside him as they rode up Bifrost to the fountain of Urd

"Son of my heart," she said softly, "must thy trouble be hidden even from thy mother? Surely, in the telling, some of thy heaviness will pass away?"

"I fear me not, mother mine," the god answered, shaking his head sadly, "the trouble is too deep, and yet it is but a dream."

"Tell it, my son"

But they rode far before Baldur spoke again.

"These seven nights have I dreamed a dream of

THE DEATH OF BALDUR

Hel, dread mistress of the dead Each night her awful figure—with face half-livid like a corpse, half-human—stands at the door and beckons me with bony hand to follow her to the grey Underworld. And, O mother, I must go—leaving our brilliant home, the cheerful earth where I guard the sons of men, you and my sweet wife, Nanna, to dwell with Hel in the realm of shades, since for me, as I die not in battle, there will be no Valhalla—I must leave you for evermore Mother, tell me, is it more than a dream ? ”

Cold fear gripped the heart of Frigga, but she answered calmly

“ Dreams are of many kinds, my son ; this will I tell to thy father, and his wisdom shall make all plain Meanwhile be brave and bright, for surely Death would not touch my son ”

Then Baldur, somewhat comforted, sped on to meet the Nornir.

But that night, when he had gone back with Nanna to Breidablik, the gods and goddesses sat in council with All-Father, and it was agreed that he should ride to Niflheim to ask the future of the dead Volva or Sibyl who lay buried there

Saddling Sleipnir, Odin rode down the darksome way, through narrow defiles where daylight died and noisome shapes flitted and crawled, past misty wraiths that fled moaning and wringing their hands, past Garm, the baying hound of Hel ; until, by the sharp echo of Sleipnir's hoofs, he knew that he stood by the eastern gate of the lofty hall, where was raised the barrow of the dead Spae-wife

Rising in his stirrups, he chanted those mighty runes that bring the dead to life.

“ Volva, arise ! By the Nornir, by the spirit of Mimir, by all the mighty runes of heaven and earth, I bid thee rise and answer me ! ”

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Then by the hissing lightning-flashes he beheld the barrow slowly yawn, and through the chasm came the Volva, wan and spent, dragged wearily forth, wringing her hands.

"Who art thou, unknown mortal," she wailed, "that hast called me on this long and toilsome journey? Chilled by snow, beaten by rain, soaked by night-dew have I lain here since the long-past days of my life. Why callest thou me, Unknown? What is thy name?"

"Vegtam am I—the Way-wise," Odin answered "For thy tidings of Hel will I give thee word of Earth. For whom are her walls hung with painted shields and the feast-benches set?"

"For Baldur, son of Odin, is the golden mead brewed. A full cup shall he drink with Hel. I am aweary, I will speak no more."

"Speak on, O Sibyl, for I must know. Who shall be Baldur's bane? Who the slayer of Odin's son?"

"The fateful branch shall Hodr bear. Against my will have I spoken. I will speak no more."

"Speak on, O Sibyl, for I must know. Who will avenge the death of Baldur?"

"Vali, the day-old son of Odin. I am aweary, I will speak no more."

"Speak on, O Sibyl, for I must know. Who is it that alone rejoices in the death of Baldur?"

But now the Volva was angered.

"No Vegtam art thou! Odin, the Ancient of Days, must thou be, since none other could know that one being would joy in Baldur's death. Ride homeward and be proud, for none shall behold me again until Loki loose his bonds and the Darkness fall upon the gods. I am aweary, I will speak no more."

The barrow closed over her, the lightnings ceased and, heavy-hearted, All-Father took his way back.

THE DEATH OF BALDUR

One thing had he learnt—that Loki should soon be bound and an end made to his wickedness

In Asgard he sought Frigga and told her all. Thoughtfully she laid down her distaff.

“A branch,” she murmured, “since it is a branch that may slay our son, I see a way to save him”

Wrapping herself in her veil, she passed through the worlds of Asgard and Midgard, taking from all things an oath that none would harm her beloved.

Trees, flowers, rocks and stones, the beasts of the fields, the woods and the seas, light elves and swart-elves and spirits of the air and water, gladly swore that none would harm the Shining God.

Then, weary but at peace, Frigga returned to her hall and told the Æsir what she had done

Light at heart, as at the passing of a cloud, one cried .

“Let us go to the garth and make play with Baldur. Bring arrows, spears, and stones to aim at him and swords to cleave him through. Sport will it be to see him stand unharmed

This they did and Baldur stood, calm and grave, with a look of sadness in his blue eyes, as the arrows and spears fell thick around him and the sword-blows rained in vain, while the Æsir laughed and the Asynjar clapped their hands

So great was their relief that all were merrier than they had been for many days past

Only blind Hodr leant gloomily with folded arms against a wall in the shade, taking no part.

Now it chanced that Loki had been absent and knew naught of all that had passed. Seeing the crowd in the peace-garth he stole up to learn the cause, then crept away to a dark corner to think

Were Baldur gone, the brightness of Asgard would be dimmed and the destruction of the gods brought a little nearer.

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How could he work this play of the Æsir for his own wicked ends ?

Hiding in the forest, he changed himself into the form of an old and tottering woman and, leaning on a stick, made his way to the door of Frigga's palace, where she sat smiling as she watched the gods at play.

"Sit thee down, mother," she said, "and drink a measure of milk during thy rest "

"What do they there," quavered the crone, "that they make so merry ? "

"They make play with my son," Frigga answered, "for naught can injure him " And she told the tale of her journey

"And did all things swear the oath ? " asked the woman

"All——" said Frigga proudly, then she stopped suddenly. "Nay, one there was that I overlooked, but so small and weak is it that it is harmless."

"And that, great queen, is—— ? " the old woman spoke in feverish haste.

"Merely the mistletoe that grows on the great oak at Valhall's gate. A soft, thin twig it is "

"True," sneered the crone, "it is but a poor thing and of no account And now, O Frigga, I thank thee for thy welcome and will go my way "

Loki limped off until he reached the wood, then, taking his own shape, he sped to the west gate of Valhalla There among the spreading oak branches he found the green-grey twig and cut it

Muttering runes over it, he laughed to see it grow and lengthen until it was as thick and firm as a spear-haft.

"Small and weak, forsooth ! " he laughed, "thou wilt yet serve my turn."

He pointed one end with his sharp knife, then hurried off to join the Æsir in the peace-garth Sidling up to Hodr, who still stood sadly by the wall, he asked

THE DEATH OF BALDUR

"Why loiterest thou here alone, O Hodr? Thy strength should surely be put forth in Baldur's honour."

"In my everlasting night, what can I do in my brother's honour?" Hodr replied bitterly; "besides, no weapon have I"

"Take this," said Loki, giving him the mistletoe shaft, "and I will guide thy hand."

Hodr went forward into the ring and took aim, amid the heartening shouts of the Æsir. The spear clove the air and, in a second, the shouts were stilled and blank dismay fell upon all, for Baldur, pierced and bleeding, fell dead upon the sward.

"What is it? Why are ye still?" blind Hodr asked. "What has befallen?"

"Thy brother is dead, slain by thy luckless hand, O Hodr. Woe the day for Asgard and the gods!"

Threats and curses arose, mingled with the clash of arms, for in their rage and grief they would have done Hodr to death, had not All-Father—grave and pale in his sorrow—appeared before them with uplifted warning hand.

He knew that the Volva's words must be fulfilled, this was the will of the Great Power above all, that had decreed the passing of the gods at Ragnarok. The bright days of Asgard were done, the Æsir must face their end with brave serenity.

"No strife must there be in the Peace-garth," he said solemnly. "Cease mourning, take up our beloved and bear him to his pyre."

"Not yet! not yet!" prayed Frigga, stilling her sobs, "there is yet one chance to save him. Husband, let me try!"

Odin bent his pitying glance upon her, for he knew it would be vain.

"As thou wilt, dear one; speak."

"Is there one here," she asked, "with courage

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to go down to Hel ? Perchance the dread queen may hear our prayers and give us back the light of our eyes, the joy of our hearts. Who of ye all will venture ? ”

“ That will I,” said Hermodr, the messenger, stepping forward “ I fear not Hel and her hounds, if I may have Sleipnir for my journey.” And in a moment the fearless Ase was gone

Slowly and reverently was Baldur borne to the shore, where Hringhorn, his ship, was drawn up. High was the wood piled for the funeral fire, the Shining God laid thereon with costly stuffs and precious spices spread around All Asgard came in bitter grief—Valkyrjar, elves and spirits of wood and mountain, even the milder giants came trooping from their haunts, and the Nornir, leaving their toil, swept down to do honour to the darling of the world

One more grief they had to bear. The gentle Nanna, Baldur’s wife, leant on the arm of Frigga. As she beheld the cloth of gold laid over her husband’s still face, hiding it for ever from the light of the sun, she gave one low soft wail and fell forward at the feet of Frigga

The goddess stooped to lift her tenderly, but her heart was broken She was dead Stunned at this second blow, the gods stood silent until Odin spoke

“ Lay her to sleep by the side of him she loved. Give me the torch ”

With his ravens fluttering round his head, amid the sobs of the watching crowd, All-Father bent over his son and laid the magic arm-ring, Draupnir, upon his breast Then he whispered long into the dead ear and, with a deep sigh, set the torch to the pyre, while Nornir, Æsir, Valkyrjar, and men stood with bowed heads

But when they would have launched Hringhorn

EXCALIBUR

the vessel would not move, no matter how mighty their efforts

As they paused to rest, a mountain giant drew near.

"In all reverence," said he, "there is but Hyrrokkin the giantess with strength to move Hringhorn. Bid me fetch her"

"Go," said Odin, and the giant sped away, returning quickly with the giant maid, riding upon a wolf that she bridled with writhing serpents.

Jumping from her steed, she looked scornfully round at those she thought but weaklings, put her hand against the ship and, with one push, sent it gliding into the water

Far out at sea the flames burnt bright as Hringhorn sailed on and, until the great column of fire was lost in the haze of night, the Æsir and their followers waited and watched.

Then, when they could see no more for the aching of their eyes, Frigga turned to Odin and held out her hands, whispering piteously

"He will return ! He will return !"

But Odin shook his head and slowly led her back to desolate Asgard

KATHARINE F BOULT

EXCALIBUR

THEN Sir Lucan took up the king the one part, and Sir Bedivere the other part, and in the lifting, the king swooned, and Sir Lucan fell in a swoon with the lift, that therewith the noble knight's heart brast. And when king Arthur came to himself again, he beheld Sir Lucan how he lay. Alas, said the king, this is unto me a full heavy sight to see this noble duke so die for my sake, for he would have holpen me

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that had more need of help than I. Alas, he would not complain him, his heart was so set to help me. Now Jesu have mercy upon his soul. Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother. Leave this mourning and weeping, said the king, for all this will not avail me for, wit thou well, and I might live myself the death of Sir Lucan would grieve me evermore ; but my time hieth fast, said the king. Therefore, said Arthur, take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there, I charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again, and tell me what thou there seest. My lord, said Bedivere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly bring you word again. So Sir Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and haft were all of precious stones, and then he said to himself, If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And as soon as he might he came again unto the king, and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword into the water. What sawest thou there ? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but waves and winds. That is untruly said of thee, said the king ; therefore go thou lightly again, and do my command as thou art to me lief and dear, spare not, but throw it in. Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand ; and then him thought sin and shame to throw away that noble sword, and so eft he hid the sword, and returned again, and told to the king that he had been at the water and done his commandment. What saw thou there ? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but the waters wap and the waves wan. Ah traitor, untrue, said king Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would have wend that thou that hast been to me so lief and dear, and thou art

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named a noble knight, and would betray me for the riches of the sword. But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands, for thou wouldest for my rich sword see me dead. Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword, and lightly took it up, and went to the water side, and there he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword as far into the water as he might, and there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king, and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long. Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw king Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king. and so he did softly. And there received him three queens with great mourning, and so they set him down, and in one of their laps king Arthur laid his head, and then that queen said, Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas, this wound on your head hath caught over much cold. And so then they rowed from the land; and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried, Ah, my lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies. Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in. For I will into the vale of Avilion, to heal me of my grievous

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wound And if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul. But ever the queens and the ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took the forest

SIR THOMAS MALORY

DEATH AND THE RUFFIANS

IN Flanders, a long while ago, there was a company of young men who committed every act of riot and foolishness—drinking, dancing, playing, and throwing of dice ; night and day this was evermore their game .

These three rioters long before the first chime of early bell, were drinking together in a tavern , and as they sat, they heard a knell going before a corpse that was being carried to the grave when one of them, calling to the tapster lad, “ Go and inquire,” said he, “ what corpse is that just passing by, and bring us word.” “ Sir,” said the boy, “ I need not do that, for I heard two hours before you came here He was an old companion of yours · he was carried off suddenly last night as he sat upon his bench—drunk There came a private thief, called Death, who kills all the people in this country, and with his spear striking him to the heart, he went his way without speaking a word. He has slain a thousand people, this pestilence and, master, before you come into his presence, I think it proper that you should beware of such an adversary Be evermore ready to meet him So my mother taught me ”

“ By St. Mary,” said the tavern-keeper, “ the child says true, for this year, in a great village, about a mile hence, Death has killed both man, woman, and child. I guess his dwelling must be thereabouts. He were

DEATH AND THE RUFFIANS

a wise man who should be on his guard to prevent his doing him some mischief ”

Then, with a frightful oath, did this rioter say, “ Is there such peril in meeting with him ? I vow to hunt him in every stile and street in the neighbourhood Hearken, comrades—let us all three join hands, as sworn brethren, to seek out this traitor Death and slay him ” And so, all stark mad and drunk, they staggered forth towards the village of which the taverner had spoken, swearing by the way many a grisly oath that if they met their enemy he should not escape them.

They had scarcely reached half a mile from home when, getting over a stile, they met a poor old man, who greeted them very meekly “ What, churl,” said the proudest of the three, “ do you do here clouted up, and crawling about at your age ? Why don’t you die ? ”

This old man looked him steadily in the face, and said, “ Because I cannot find a man, although I were to walk to the Indies to seek him, who will change his youth for my great age , and, therefore, must I bear my age as long as it is the will of God I should do so Death, alas ! will not take my life - and thus I walk about like a restless wretch, and on the ground, which is my mother’s door, early and late I knock with my staff and say to her, ‘ Dear mother, let me in Behold how I dwindle in my body Alas ! When shall my weary bones have rest ? With you, mother, would I change my coffin, that has long been my chamber companion, for a hair-cloth to wrap me in, and lie down in peace ’ Yet will she not grant me this boon ; and, therefore, pale and withered is my face. But, sirs, it is not courteous in you to offer insult to an old man, who trespasses neither in word nor deed God be with you, I must go forth upon my travel.”

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“Nay, nay, old churl,” said another of the gamblers, “by St John we do not part so lightly. You just now spoke of that traitor ‘Death,’ that goes about this country killing all our friends. By my truth, tell us where he is (for I take you to be his spy), or you shall dearly abide the consequences of your refusal. I doubt not that you are leagued with him to murder us youngsters, you false thief!”

“Sirs,” said he, “if it be your pleasure to find out ‘Death,’ turn up yon crooked path, for, upon my faith, I left him in that grove under a tree, and there he will remain for some time, neither will he attempt to hide himself in spite of all your boasting. Do you see that oak? There you will meet with him. God preserve and amend you,” said this old man.

These three rioters ran off immediately till they came to the tree, and there they found a large heap of fine gold florins. They sought no longer after Death, so glad were they at the sight of these fair and bright coins. And down they sat by the precious hoard, when the worst of the three proposed that as fortune had sent them the treasure to live in mirth and jollity, they should spend it as lightly as it came. “But,” said he, “if we take all this gold home to either of our houses, we shall run the chance of being taken up for thieves, and mayhap be hanged. We had, therefore, best carry it home slyly at night, and, in the meantime, let us draw lots who shall go to the next town and buy us bread and wine, while the other two stay and watch the money.”

So, having drawn the lots, the youngest was doomed to go to the town. As soon as he was out of sight, one of the two said to the other, “You know that we have long been sworn-brothers; now, if you will listen to me, I will show how all this gold, which is to be divided among three, shall become the property of us two only.” The other said he knew not how that

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could be, for their companion was aware that the money was with them two.

"Well," said the other, "do not betray me, and I will show you how we may bring it about. We two are stronger than one - when, therefore, he has sat down, you must get up and pretend to play with him, and while you are struggling as in game, I will yerk him under the ribs, and see that with your dagger you then do the same. Then all this gold will be shared between you and me, my dear friend! and we may do with it as we please." So these cursed wretches agreed to murder the third.

The youngest, as he went towards the town, cast about in his mind the beauty of the florins. "O Lord!" said he to himself, "if I could but have all this treasure to myself, not a man under heaven would be happier than I." Then did the great enemy of mankind put it into his head to buy poison with which he might despatch his two companions, and forth he went to an apothecary in the town, who sold him a confectionery, the smallest portion of which, to the amount of a corn of wheat, would strike a man dead before one could walk a mile.

Then this cursed villain went and purchased three bottles, into two of which he poured the poison, filling them all three with wine, and returned to his mates, thinking to carry away the gold himself by night.

What need I to proceed with my tale? As the two had contrived his death, so they murdered him, and afterward sat down to feast, proposing, when they had finished, to bury him out of the way. It so happened, however, that they took one of the bottles containing the poison, and no wretches suffered more dreadfully than they. So ended the lives of these homicides, and their poisoner. The old man they met was "Death."

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE
After Chaucer, The Pardoner's Tale

FACT AND FICTION

THE DEVIL AND ST. DUNSTAN

FOR you must know that the Devil, desiring to do some hurt to the people of Sussex, went about asking first one man, then another, who had the right of choice in it, and every one told him St Dunstan. For he was their protector, as they knew, and that was why they sent the Devil to him, knowing very well that he would get the better of the Fiend, whom the men of Sussex properly defy and harass from that day to this, as you shall often find in the pages of this book.

So the Devil went up into the Weald of a May morning when everything was pleasant to the eye and to the ear, and he found St Dunstan sitting in Cuckfield at a table in the open air, and writing verse in Latin, which he very well knew how to do. Then said the Devil to St Dunstan · “ I have come to give you your choice how Sussex shall be destroyed, for you must know that I have the power and the patent to do this thing, and there is no gainsaying me, only it is granted to your people to know the way by which they should perish ”

And indeed this is the Devil's way, always to pretend that he is the master, though he very well knows in his black heart that he is nothing of the kind.

Now St Dunstan was not the fool he looked, in spite of his round face, and round tonsure, and round eyes, and he would have his sport with the Devil before he had done with him, so he answered civilly enough .—

“ Why, Devil, I think if we must all pass, it would be pleasanter to die by way of sea-water than any other, for out of the sea came our land, and so into the sea should it go again Only I doubt your power

THE DEVIL AND ST. DUNSTAN

to do it, for we are defended against the sea by these great hills called The Downs, which will take a woundy lot of cutting through ”

“ Pooh ! bah ! ” said the Devil, rudely, in answer. “ You do not know your man ! I will cut through those little things in a night and not feel it, seeing I am the father of contractors and the original master of overseers and undertakers of great works it is child’s-play to me It is a flea-bite, a summer night’s business between sunset and dawn.”

“ Why, then,” said St Dunstan,” here is the sun nearly set over Black Down, westward of us, so go to your work , but if you have not done it by the time the cock crows over the Weald, you shall depart in God’s name ”

Then the Devil, full of joy at having cheated St Dunstan, as he thought, and at being thus able to ruin our land, which, if ever he could accomplish it, would involve the total destruction and effacement of the whole world, flew off through the air southwards, flapping his great wings So that all the people of the Weald thought it was an aeroplane, of which instrument they are delighted observers , and many came out to watch him as he flew, and some were ready to tell others what kind of aeroplane he was, and such like falsehoods.

But no sooner was it dark than the Devil, getting a great spade sent him from his farm, set to work very manfully and strongly, digging up the downs from the seaward side And the sods flew, and the great lumps of chalk he shovelled out left and right, so that it was a sight to see , and these falling all over the place, from the strong throwing of his spade, tumbled some of them upon Mount Caburn, and some of them upon Rackham Hill, and some here and some there, but most of them upon Cissbury, and that is how those great mounds grew up, of which the

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learned talk so glibly, although they know nothing of the matter whatsoever

The Devil dug and the Devil heaved until it struck midnight in Shoreham Church, and one o'clock and two o'clock and three o'clock again. And as he dug his great dyke drove deeper and deeper into the Downs so that it was very near coming out on the Wealden side, and there were not more than two dozen spits to dig before the sea would come through and drown us all

But St Dunstan (who knew all this), offering up the prayer, *Populus Tuus Domine*, . . . by the power of this prayer caused at that instant all the cocks that are in the Weald between the Western and the Eastern Rother, and from Ashdown right away to Harting Hill, and from Bodiam to Shillinglee, to wake up suddenly in defence of the good Christian people, and to haul those silly red-topped heads of theirs from under their left wings, and very broadly to crow altogether in chorus, so that such a noise was never heard before, nor will be heard thence afterwards forever, and you would have thought it was a Christmas night instead of the turn of a May morning

The Devil, then, hearing this terrible great challenge of crowing from some million throats for seventy miles one way and twenty miles the other, stopped his digging in bewilderment, and striking his spade into the ground he hopped up on to the crest of the hill and looked in wonderment up the sky and down the sky over all the stars, wondering how it could be so near day. But in this foolish action he lost the time he needed. For even as he discovered what a cheat had been played upon him, over away beyond Hawkhurst Ridge day dawned—and with a great howl the Devil was aware that his wager was lost

HILAIRE BELLOC

YOUTH

ESCAPE FROM SCHOOL

To go was settled But when and whither? When could have but one answer, for on more reasons than one I needed summer weather, and as much of it as possible. Besides that, when August came, it would bring along with it my own birthday — now, one codicil in my general vow of freedom had been, that my seventeenth birthday should not find me at school Still I needed some trifle of preparation Especially I needed a little money. I wrote, therefore, to the only confidential friend that I had—viz Lady Carbery, requesting the loan of five guineas A whole week passed without any answer This perplexed and made me uneasy — for her ladyship was rich by a vast fortune removed entirely from her husband's control, and, as I felt assured, would have cheerfully sent me twenty times the sum asked, unless her sagacity had suggested some suspicion (which seemed impossible) of the real purposes which I contemplated in the employment of the five guineas. Could I incautiously have said anything in my own letter tending that way? Certainly not; then why — But at that moment my speculations were cut short by a letter bearing a coroneted seal It was from Lady Carbery, of course, and enclosed ten guineas instead of five Slow in those days were the mails, besides which, Lady Carbery happened to be down at the seaside, whither my letter had been sent after her Now, then, including my own pocket-money,

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I possessed a dozen guineas, which seemed sufficient for my immediate purpose .

Prayers had finished The school had dissolved itself Six o'clock came, seven, eight . . . Now came the last official ceremony of the day the students were all mustered , and the names of all were challenged according to the order of precedence. My name, as usual, came first. Stepping forward, I passed Mr Lawson, and bowed to him, looking earnestly in his face, and saying to myself, " He is old and infirm, and in this world I shall not see him again " I was right , I never did see him again, nor ever shall. He looked at me complacently , smiled placidly , returned my salutation (not knowing it to be my valediction), and we parted for ever.

The morning came which was to launch me into the world , that morning from which, and from its consequences, my whole succeeding life has, in many important points, taken its colouring. At half after three I rose, and gazed with deep emotion at the ancient collegiate church, " dress'd in earliest light," and beginning to crimson with the deep lustre of a cloudless July morning I was firm and immovable in my purpose, but yet agitated by anticipation of uncertain danger and troubles .

I cannot yet recall, without smiling, an incident which occurred at that time, and which had nearly put a stop to the immediate execution of my plan. I had a trunk of immense weight ; for, besides my clothes, it contained nearly all my library. The difficulty was to get this removed to a carrier's my room being at an aerial elevation in the house, and (what was worse) the staircase which communicated with this angle of the building was accessible only by a gallery, which passed the head master's chamber-door. I was a favourite with all the servants , and

ESCAPE FROM SCHOOL

knowing that any of them would screen me, and act confidentially, I communicated my embarrassment to a groom of the head master's. The groom declared his readiness to do anything I wished, and, when the time arrived, went upstairs to bring the trunk down. This I feared was beyond the strength of any one man; however, the groom was a man "of Atlantean shoulders," and had a back as spacious as Salisbury Plain. Accordingly he persisted in bringing down the trunk alone, whilst I stood waiting at the foot of the last flight, in great anxiety for the event. For some time I heard him descending with steps slow and steady, but, unfortunately, from his trepidation, as he drew near the dangerous quarter, within a few steps of the gallery, his foot slipped, and the mighty burden, falling from his shoulders, gained such increase of impetus at each step of the descent, that, on reaching the bottom, it trundled, or rather leaped, right across, with the noise of twenty devils, against the very bedroom-door of the Archdidascalus. My first thought suggested that all was lost, and that my sole chance for effecting a retreat was—to sacrifice my baggage. However, on reflection, I determined to abide the issue. The groom, meantime, was in the utmost alarm, both on his own account and mine. but, in spite of this, so irresistibly had the sense of the ludicrous, in this unhappy contretemps, taken possession of his fancy, that he sang out a long, loud, and canorous peal of laughter, that might have wakened the "Seven Sleepers." At the sound of this resonant merriment, within the very ears of insulted authority, I could not forbear joining in it, subdued to this, not so much by the comic wilfulness of the trunk, trundling down from step to step with accelerated pace and multiplying uproar, as by the effect it had upon the groom. We both expected, as a matter of course, that Mr.

FACT AND FICTION

Lawson would sally out of his room ; for, in general, if but a mouse stirred, he sprang out like a mastiff from his kennel. Strange to say, however, on this occasion, when the noise of laughter had subsided, no sound, or rustling even, was to be heard in the bedroom. Mr Lawson had a painful complaint, which, oftentimes keeping him awake, made his sleep, when it did come, peculiarly deep. Gathering courage from the silence, the groom hoisted his burden again, and accomplished the remainder of his descent without accident. I waited until I saw the trunk placed on a wheelbarrow, and on its road to the carrier's : then, "with Providence my guide," or, more truly it might be said, with my own headstrong folly for law and impulse, I set off on foot, carrying a small parcel with some articles of dress under my arm, a favourite English poet in one pocket, and an odd volume containing about one-half of Canter's *Euripides* in the other.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

SCHOOLDAYS

By the time I went to this day-school my taste for natural history, and more especially for collecting, was well developed. I tried to make out the names of plants, and collected all sorts of things shells, seals, franks, coins, and minerals.

One little event during this year has fixed itself very firmly in my mind, and I hope that it has done so from my conscience having been afterwards sorely troubled by it, it is curious as showing that apparently I was interested at this early age in the variability of plants ! I told another little boy that I could produce variously coloured polyantheses and prim-roses by watering them with certain coloured fluids,

SCHOOLDAYS

which was of course a monstrous fable, and had never been tried by me I may here also confess that as a little boy I was much given to inventing deliberate falsehoods, and this was always done for the sake of causing excitement For instance, I once gathered much valuable fruit from my father's trees and hid it in the shrubbery, and then ran in breathless haste to spread the news that I had discovered a hoard of stolen fruit

I must have been a simple little fellow when I first went to the school A boy of the name of Garnett took me into a cake-shop one day, and bought some cakes for which he did not pay, as the shopman trusted him. When we came out I asked him why he did not pay for them, and he instantly answered, " Why, do you not know that my uncle left a great sum of money to the town on condition that every tradesman should give whatever was wanted without payment to anyone who wore his old hat and moved it in a particular manner ? " and he then showed me how it was moved He then went into another shop where he was trusted, and asked for some small article, moving his hat in the proper manner, and of course obtained it without payment When we came out he said, " Now if you like to go by yourself into that cake-shop (how well I remember its exact position), I will lend you my hat, and you can get whatever you like if you move the hat on your head properly " I gladly accepted the generous offer, and went in and asked for some cakes, moved the old hat, and was walking out of the shop, when the shopman made a rush at me, so I dropped the cakes and ran for dear life, and was astonished at being greeted with shouts of laughter by my false friend Garnett . .

In the summer of 1818 I went to Dr Butler's school in Shrewsbury, and remained there for seven years till Midsummer 1825, when I was sixteen years old.

FACT AND FICTION

I boarded at this school, so that I had the great advantage of living the life of a true schoolboy ; but as the distance was hardly more than a mile to my home, I very often ran there in the longer intervals between the callings over and before locking up at night. This, I think, was in many ways advantageous to me by keeping up home affections and interests. .

Nothing could have been worse for the development of my mind than Dr Butler's school, as it was strictly classical, nothing else being taught, except a little ancient geography and history. The school as a means of education to me was simply a blank. During my whole life I have been singularly incapable of mastering any language. Especial attention was paid to verse-making, and this I could never do well. I had many friends, and got together a good collection of old verses, which by patching together, sometimes aided by other boys, I could work into any subject. Much attention was paid to learning by heart the lessons of the previous day , this I could effect with great facility, learning forty or fifty lines of Virgil or Homer, whilst I was in morning chapel , but this exercise was utterly useless, for every verse was forgotten in forty-eight hours. I was not idle, and with the exception of versification, generally worked conscientiously at my classics, not using cribs. The sole pleasure I ever received from such studies, was from some of the odes of Horace, which I admired greatly.

When I left school I was for my age neither high nor low in it , and I believe that I was considered by all my masters and by my father as a very ordinary boy, rather below the common standard in intellect. To my deep mortification my father once said to me, " You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching, and you will be a disgrace to yourself and all your family " But my father, who was the kindest

SCHOOLDAYS OF THOMAS EDWARDS

man I ever knew, and whose memory I love with all my heart, must have been angry and somewhat unjust when he used such words.

CHARLES DARWIN

SCHOOLDAYS OF THOMAS EDWARDS

HE was next sent to the Lancaster School in Harriet Street. There were two masters in this school. The upper classes were in the highest storey, the other classes in the lowest. The master of the lower class, to which Tom belonged, knowing his weakness, ordered him, on entering, not to bring any of his beasts to that school. He was to pay more attention to his lessons than he had yet done, or he would be punished severely. He did not bring anything but his school-books for a long time, but at last his usual temptation befell him. It happened in this way.

On his way to and from school, along School Hill, he observed a sparrow's nest built in the corner part of a spout. He greatly envied the sparrow's nest. But he could only feast his longing eyes at a distance. He tried to climb the spout once or twice, but it was too high, and bulged out at the top. The clamps which held the spout to the wall were higher at the top than at the bottom. He had almost given up the adventure in despair, when one day, on going to school, he observed two men standing together and looking up in the direction of the nest. Boy-like and probably thinking that he was a party concerned in the affair, he joined them, and listened to what they were talking about. He found that the nest interfered with the flow of water along the spout, and that it must be removed; and that the whole water-way along the spout must also be cleaned out.

FACT AND FICTION

Tom was now on the alert, and watched the spout closely. That day passed, and nothing was done. The next day passed, and still the men had not made their appearance. But on the third day, on his way to school, he observed a man and a boy placing a long ladder against the house. Tom stopped, and guessing what was about to be done, he intended to ask the man for the nest and its contents. The man was about to ascend the ladder, when, after feeling his pockets and finding that something had been forgotten, he sent the boy back to the shed for something or other—most probably a trowel. Then, having struck a light, and set fire to his pipe, the man betook himself to the churchyard, which was near at hand.

A thought now struck Tom. Might he not take the nest himself without waiting for it, and perhaps without getting it after all? He looked about. He looked into the churchyard gate, nearly opposite. He saw nobody. The coast was clear. Tom darted across the street, and went rapidly up the ladder. Somebody shrieked to him from a window on the other side. It staggered him at first. But he climbed upward, got to the nest, and, after some wriggling and twisting, he pulled it away, and got down before either the man or the boy had returned.

It was eggs that he wanted, but, lo and behold! here was a nest of five well-fledged birds. Instead of taking the birds home, Tom was foolish enough to take them with him to school. He contrived to get the nest into the school unobserved, and put it below the form on which he was seated, never thinking that the little things would get hungry, or try to make their escape. All went on well for about an hour. Then there was a slight commotion. A chirrup was heard. And presently the throats of all were opened — “*Chirrup ! chirrup !*” Before the

SCHOOLDAYS OF THOMAS EDWARDS

master could get the words "What's that?" out of his mouth, the birds themselves answered him by leaving their nest and fluttering round the school-room—the boys running after them! "Silence! Back to your seats!" cried the master. There was now stillness in the school, except the fluttering of the birds

The culprit was called to the front "This is more of your work, Edward, is it not?" "Yes, sir." "And did I not tell you to bring no more of these things here?" "Yes, sir; but I only got them on my way up, or I wouldn't have brought them here." "I don't believe it," said the master. "Yes, it's true, it's true," shouted some of the scholars "Silence! How do you know?" "We saw him harryin' the nest as we came up School Hill" "How?" "He was on the top of a long ladder takin' the nest oot o' a spoot" "Well, sir," he said to Edward, "you are one of the most daring and determined little fellows that I have ever heard of. It seems you will follow nobody's advice. If you do not give up your tricks, you will some day fall and break your neck. But as you have told me the truth, I will forgive you this once. But remember! it's the last time. Now go, collect your birds, and take them away!"

Edward groped about to collect the birds, but few of them were left. The windows having been let down, they had all escaped except one. He got that one and descended to the street. There he recovered two other "gorbals." He went home with his three birds; but, his sister being ill, his mother told him to take them away, because they made such a noise. In the course of the day he gave them to another boy, in exchange for a little picture-book, containing "The Death and Burial of Cock Robin."

SAMUEL SMILES

FACT AND FICTION

TOM TULLIVER AT SCHOOL

IN his secret heart he yearned to have Maggie with him, and was almost ready to dote on her exasperating acts of forgetfulness, though, when he was at home, he always represented it as a great favour on his part to let Maggie trot by his side on his pleasure excursions.

And before this dreary half-year was ended, Maggie actually came. Mrs. Stelling had given a general invitation for the little girl to come and stay with her brother. so when Mr. Tulliver drove over to King's Lorton late in October, Maggie came too, with the sense that she was taking a great journey, and beginning to see the world. It was Mr. Tulliver's first visit to see Tom, for the lad must learn not to think too much about home.

"Well, my lad," he said to Tom, when Mr. Stelling had left the room to announce the arrival to his wife, and Maggie had begun to kiss Tom freely, "you look rarely! School agrees with you."

Tom wished he had looked rather ill.

"I don't think I *am* well, father," said Tom; "I wish you'd ask Mr. Stelling not to let me do Euclid—it brings on the toothache, I think."

(The toothache was the only malady to which Tom had ever been subject.)

"Euclid, my lad—why, what's that?" said Mr. Tulliver.

"Oh, I don't know: its definitions, and axioms, and triangles, and things. It's a book I've got to learn in—there's no sense in it."

"Go, go!" said Mr. Tulliver reprovingly, "you mustn't say so. You must learn what your master tells you. He knows what it's right for you to learn."

"I'll help you now, Tom," said Maggie, with a little air of patronising consolation. "I'm come to

TOM TULLIVER AT SCHOOL

stay ever so long, if Mrs Stelling asks me. I've brought my box and my pinafores, haven't I, father? "

" *You* help me, you silly little thing ! " said Tom, in such high spirits at this announcement that he quite enjoyed the idea of confounding Maggie by showing her a page of Euclid " I should like to see you doing one of *my* lessons ! Why, I learn Latin too ! Girls never learn such things They're too silly."

" I know what Latin is very well," said Maggie confidently " Latin's a language There are Latin words in the Dictionary. There's bonus, a gift."

" Now, you're just wrong there, Miss Maggie ! " said Tom, secretly astonished " You think you're very wise ! But ' bonus ' means ' good,' as it happens—bonus, bona, bonum "

" Well, that's no reason why it shouldn't mean ' gift,' " said Maggie stoutly " It may mean several things—almost every word does. There's ' lawn '—it means the grass-plot, as well as the stuff pocket-handkerchiefs are made of "

" Well done, little 'un," said Mr Tulliver, laughing, while Tom felt rather disgusted with Maggie's knowingness, though beyond measure cheerful at the thought that she was going to stay with him Her conceit would soon be overawed by the actual inspection of his books

Mrs. Stelling, in her pressing invitation, did not mention a longer time than a week for Maggie's stay ; but Mr Stelling, who took her between his knees, and asked her where she stole her dark eyes from, insisted that she must stay a fortnight Maggie thought Mr. Stelling was a charming man, and Mr. Tulliver was quite proud to leave his little wench where she would have an opportunity of showing her cleverness to appreciating strangers. So it was agreed that she should not be fetched home till the end of the fortnight.

" Now, then, come with me into the study, Maggie,"

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said Tom, as their father drove away "What do you shake and toss your head now for, you silly?" he continued; for though her hair was now under a new dispensation, and was brushed smoothly behind her ears, she seemed still in imagination to be tossing it out of her eyes. "It makes you look as if you were crazy"

"Oh, I can't help it," said Maggie impatiently. "Don't tease me, Tom Oh, what books!" she exclaimed, as she saw the bookcases in the study "How I should like to have as many books as that!"

"Why, you couldn't read one of 'em," said Tom triumphantly "They're all Latin"

"No, they aren't," said Maggie "I can read the back of this 'History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire'"

"Well, what does that mean? *You* don't know," said Tom, wagging his head.

"But I could soon find out," said Maggie scornfully

"Why, how?"

"I should look inside, and see what it was about"

"You'd better not, Miss Maggie," said Tom, seeing her hand on the volume "Mr Stelling lets nobody touch his books without leave, and *I* shall catch it, if you take it out"

"Oh, very well! Let me see all *your* books, then," said Maggie, turning to throw her arms round Tom's neck, and rub his cheek with her small round nose

Tom, in the gladness of his heart at having dear old Maggie to dispute with and crow over again, seized her round the waist, and began to jump with her round the large library table Away they jumped with more and more vigour, till Maggie's hair flew from behind her ears, and twirled about like an animated mop But the revolutions round the table became more and more irregular in their sweep, till at

TOM TULLIVER AT SCHOOL

last reaching Mr. Stelling's reading-stand, they sent it thundering down with its heavy lexicons to the floor. Happily it was the ground-floor, and the study was a one-storied wing to the house, so that the downfall made no alarming resonance, though Tom stood dizzy and aghast for a few minutes, dreading the appearance of Mr. or Mrs. Stelling.

"Oh, I say, Maggie," said Tom at last, lifting up the stand, "we must keep quiet here, you know. If we break anything, Mrs Stelling'll make us cry *peccavi*."

"What's that?" said Maggie

"Oh, it's the Latin for a good scolding," said Tom, not without some pride in his knowledge.

"Is she a cross woman?" said Maggie

"I believe you!" said Tom, with an emphatic nod.

"I think all women are crosser than men," said Maggie. "Aunt Glegg's a great deal crosser than Uncle Glegg, and mother scolds me more than father does."

"Well, *you'll* be a woman some day," said Tom, "so *you* needn't talk."

"But I shall be a *clever* woman," said Maggie, with a toss

"Oh, I dare say, and a nasty conceited thing. Everybody'll hate you."

"But you oughtn't to hate me, Tom—it'll be very wicked of you, for I shall be your sister."

"Yes, but if you're a nasty disagreeable thing, I *shall* hate you."

"Oh but, Tom, you won't! I shan't be disagreeable. I shall be very good to you—and I shall be good to everybody. You won't hate me really, will you, Tom?"

"Oh, bother! never mind! Come, it's time for me to learn my lessons. See here! what I've got to do," said Tom, drawing Maggie towards him and

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showing her his theorem, while she pushed her hair behind her ears, and prepared herself to prove her capability of helping him in Euclid. She began to read with full confidence in her own powers, but presently, becoming quite bewildered, her face flushed with irritation. It was unavoidable—she must confess her incompetency, and she was not fond of humiliation.

“It’s nonsense !” she said, “and very ugly stuff—nobody need want to make it out.”

“Ah, there now, Miss Maggie !” said Tom, drawing the book away, and wagging his head at her ; “you see you’re not so clever as you thought you were.”

“Oh,” said Maggie, pouting, “I dare say I could make it out if I’d learned what goes before, as you have.”

“But that’s what you just couldn’t, Miss Wisdom,” said Tom. “For it’s all the harder when you know what goes before. for then you’ve got to say what definition 3 is, and what axiom V. is. But get along with you now. I must go on with this. Here’s the Latin Grammar. See what you can make of that.”

Maggie found the Latin Grammar quite soothing after her mathematical mortification, for she delighted in new words, and quickly found that there was an English Key at the end, which would make her very wise about Latin, at slight expense. She presently made up her mind to skip the rules in the Syntax—the examples became so absorbing. These mysterious sentences, snatched from an unknown context—like strange horns of beasts, and leaves of unknown plants, brought from some far-off region—gave boundless scope to her imagination, and were all the more fascinating because they were in a peculiar tongue of their own, which she could learn to interpret. It was really very interesting—the Latin

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Grammar that Tom had said no girls could learn ; and she was proud because she found it interesting. The most fragmentary examples were her favourites. *Mors omnibus est communis* would have been jejune, only she liked to know the Latin , but the fortunate gentleman whom every one congratulated because he had a son “ endowed with *such* a disposition ” afforded her a great deal of pleasant conjecture, and she was quite lost in the “ thick grove penetrable by no star,” when Tom called out—

“ Now, then, Magsie, give us the Grammar ! ”

“ Oh, Tom, it’s such a pretty book ! ” she said, as she jumped out of the large arm-chair to give it him , “ it’s much prettier than the Dictionary I could learn Latin very soon I don’t think it’s at all hard ”

“ Oh, I know what you’ve been doing,” said Tom ; “ you’ve been reading the English at the end. Any donkey can do that ”

Tom seized the book and opened it with a determined and business-like air, as much as to say that he had a lesson to learn which no donkeys would find themselves equal to Maggie, rather piqued, turned to the bookcases to amuse herself with puzzling out the titles

GEORGE ELIOT

CHARWOMAN AND OFFICE-BOY

ON this particular morning in autumn, Mrs Cross was rather later than usual That did not matter very much because it was not one of the floor-washing mornings but just one of the ordinary dust-round-and-sweep-up-a-bit mornings But somebody, one of the interfering sort, had left a note for her in the General Office, that is, the room just behind the frosted glass partitions and the sort of ticket-office window with

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Inquiries on it, and this note said . *Mrs Cross What about turning this room out for a change ? Thank you !*

“ An’ thank you ! ” said Mrs Cross, quite aloud and with grim irony, as she tore up this note and popped it in the top of the stove To show that she was not the kind of woman to be dictated to in this fashion, she immediately went and gave the other room, Mr. Dersingham’s private office, a thoroughly good sweeping and dusting Having done that, she waddled straight across the General Office to the other room, which, with its long counter and cupboards and drawers and samples of wood and litter, was the one she liked least, being always in a terrible mess On her way, she completely ignored the General Office, did not even give it a look, just as if it were full of people in the habit of leaving notes Her back told it very plainly that she would clean up the office in her own way. Once in the other room, the nasty one, she felt so pleased about this rebuff that she set to work with a will, and for the next ten minutes was enveloped in a cloud of dust By the time she had finished, there may have been very few articles in the room that were free from dust, but nearly all of them had at least exchanged their old dust for another variety that came perhaps from quite a distant corner. Then she thrust back a wisp of grey hair from her swollen face, on which time and trouble had first sketched a few lines and then deepened them by puffing out the surrounding flesh ; she dragged her swollen feet across to the discarded leather office chair in the corner ; she flopped into the chair and put her swollen hands—for though she said with some truth that she worked her fingers to the bone, hot water and soap and wet scrubbing brushes had piled sodden, nerveless flesh on those bones—in her lap, and rested Immediately she plunged into a fierce reverie, in which the figure of

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Mr. Cross, who suffered from rheumatoid arthritis, the two rooms between the City Road and the black Regent's Canal that were her home, Mrs Tomlinson, the woman she was going to clean for later in the morning, and the image of a pound of stewing-steak, all played their parts. Then she returned to the General Office.

This time, she noticed its existence, and what she saw suddenly gave her a little fright. She had been a bit too hasty (her old fault) about that note. It really did want a good tidying. She had neglected it a bit lately, because for the last three mornings she had been late, all because she was not getting her proper sleep, and all because Mrs. Williams and her husband on the next floor had got a loud speaker, one of them little horns, and it was not only a loud speaker but also a late speaker, and in fact would speak your head off. And if she didn't get on with this office a bit, the one that left that note would be complaining to Mr Dersingham, and then that might mean another job gone, all due to hastiness. She had better be putting her hastiness behind a brush and duster. And, as if to give her a final push, a clock somewhere outside sounded the half hour. Half past eight!—well, now she would have to bustle round.

She was still bustling round—though, to be accurate, she was only engaged in passing a languid, duster-holding hand over the tin cover of the typewriter—when Messrs Twigg and Dersingham's next employee arrived, and their day really began. The frosted glass door that opened from the little space in which inquirers were kept waiting for a few minutes, now swung back to admit into the General Office the body of a boy about fifteen, whose eyes were focussed upon a paper, folded into a very small compass, that he held about four inches away.

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from them. This was the office boy or very junior clerk, Stanley Poole, who had just come all the way from Hackney, which remained with him as a combined flavour of cocoa and bread dipped in bacon fat that still haunted his palate. His body, which was small and thin but sufficiently tough, and was crowned by a snub nose, some freckles, greyish-greenish eyes, and some unbrushed sandy hair, had been in the service of Twigg and Dersingham for the last twenty minutes, when it had boarded a tram and a bus and had walked down several streets. Now it had arrived in the office. But his mind had not yet begun the day's work. Even now, when the very threshold had been passed, it was still in the wilds of Mexico, enjoying the heroic and exhilarating companionship of Jack Dashwood and Dick Robinson, the terror of all Mexican bandits.

"So you've come," said Mrs. Cross, putting back that wisp of hair again. "It's about time I was 'opping it if you've come."

Stanley looked up and nodded. With a sigh, he withdrew from the world of the Boy Aviators and the Mexican bandits. He tried to fold his paper into a still smaller compass, before cramming it into his pocket.

"Read, read, read!" cried Mrs. Cross derisively. "Some of yer's always at it. What they find to put in all the time beats me. What's that yer reading now? Murders, I'll bet."

"'Tisn't," replied Stanley, balancing himself on one leg for no particular reason that we can discover. "It's a boys' paper." He made this announcement with a kind of sullen reluctance, not because he was really a sullen lad, but simply because he had discovered that when his elders asked these questions, they were usually not in search of information, but were trying to get at him.

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"Penny bloods, them things is"

"'Tisn't," said Stanley, balancing himself on the other leg now. "This is tuppence. I buy it ev'ry week, have done ever since it came out. *Boy's Companion*, it's called. It's got the best tales in," he added in a sudden burst of confidence. "All about boys who fly in airplanes an' go to Mexico an' Russia an' all over an' have advenshers!"

"Advenshers! They'd be better off at 'ome—with their advenshers! You'll be wantin' to go an' 'ave advenshers yerself next—and then what will yer poor mother say?"

But this only goaded Stanley into making new and even more dangerous admissions. "I'm going to try and be a detective," he mumbled.

"Well now, did y'ever!" cried Mrs. Cross, at once shocked and delighted. "A detective! I've never 'eard of such a thing! What d'yer come 'ere for if yer want to be a detective. There's no detectin' 'ere. Go on with yer! 'Ere, yer not big enough, and yer never will be either 'cos yer'd 'ave to be a pleeceman first before they'd let yer be a detective, and they'd never 'ave yer as a pleeceman."

"You can be a detective without being a bobby first," replied Stanley, scornfully. He had gone into this question, and was not to be put off by a mere outsider like Mrs. Cross. "'Sides, you can be a private detective an' find jewels an' shadder people. That's what I'd like to do—shadder people."

"What's that? Follerin' 'em about, is it? Oh, that's nasty work, that is. Shadderin'! I'd shadder yer if I caught yer at it, my word I would." And Mrs. Cross took up her brush and dust-pan and gave them a fierce little shake, almost as if she had just caught *them* at it. "Now you just get on with yer work like a good boy, and don't you go tellin' anybody else yer want to be shadderin' else yer'll be

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gettin' yerself into trouble. Yer can't expect people to 'ave any patience with shadderers. If Mr. Dersingham knew what was goin' on in that 'ead of yours, 'e'd tell yer to go straight 'ome and have nothing more to do with yer, and yer'd find yerself shadderin' for another job, and that's all the shadderin' *you'd* get "

Stanley turned away, and then pulled a face, not so much at Mrs Cross as at the whole narrow school of thought represented at this moment by Mrs. Cross. He went to the letter-box and brought back the morning's post, which he placed on the nearest high desk. There he remembered something, and looked with a grin at Mrs Cross, who was now having a final bustle round.

"Did you see that note left for you?" he inquired.

Mrs Cross suspended operations at once. "Yes, I did see it, and if yer want to know where it is, I can tell yer, 'cos it's in that stove." She struck an attitude that suggested a counsel for the prosecution of the high-handed type. "And oo, might I ask, left that there note? Oo wrote it? Just you tell me that, that's all?"

"Miss Matfield wrote it."

"An' I thought as much. Soon as I set eyes on it, I knew Miss Matfield wrote it! Miss Matfield!" Her irony was now so terrible that she shook all over with it, and her head seemed in danger of falling off. "And 'ow long, might I ask, 'as Miss Matfield been in this office, doin' 'er typewriting? 'Ow long? Two munce? All right—three munce. An' 'ow long 'ave I been cleaning for Twiggs and Dersinghams, coming 'ere ev'ry morning, week in an' week out, to clean this office? Yer don't know. No, yer don't know, and yer Miss Matfield doesn't know. Well, I'll tell yer. I've been cleaning for

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Twiggs and Dersinghams for seven years, I 'ave It wasn't this Mr Dersingham that started me, it was 'is uncle, old Mr. Dersingham, 'im oo's dead now—an' a nice old gentleman 'e was too, nicer than this one an' a better 'ead on 'im to my way of thinking—and when this Mr. Dersingham took on, 'e sent for me and said, 'You keep on cleaning, Mrs Cross, and I'll pay yer whatever my uncle did,' that's what 'e said to me in that very room there, and I said, 'Much obliged, sir, and the very best attention as always,' and 'e said 'I'm sure it will, Mrs Cross' Typewriters! Coming and going so fast I can't be bothered learning their names If there's been one 'ere since I started, there's been eight or ten or a dozen. Miss Matfield! Now when she comes in, just give 'er a message from me," she cried, thoroughly reckless by this time "Just say to 'er 'Mrs Cross 'as seen the note left and only asks oo is cleaning this office, Miss Matfield or 'er, and if 'er, then them oo's been doing it for seven years, week in and week out, knows their own business better than them oo's only been typewriting 'ere for three munce, and so Mrs Cross'll thank her to keep 'er notes to 'erself in future till they're asked for.' Just you tell 'er that, boy. And I'll say good-morning "

With that, Mrs Cross unfastened her apron and gathered up her things with great dignity, gave Stanley a final shake of the head, and waddled out, closing the outer door behind her, a moment later, with a decisive bang.

Left to himself, Stanley, with the contemptuous air of a man who is meant for better things, began his morning's work After taking off the two typewriter covers, dumping a few books on the high desks, and filling up all the ink-pots and putting out clean sheets of blotting paper (which duty was a little fad of Mr. Smeeth's), he remembered that he was a creature

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with a soul So, grasping a short round ruler in such a way that it remotely resembled a revolver, he crouched behind Mr Smeeth's high stool for a few tense moments, then sprang out, pointing his gun at the place where the great criminal's bottom waist-coat button would have been, and said hoarsely. "Put 'em up, Diamond Jack No, you don't! Not a move!" He gave a warning flourish of the gun, then said casually, over his shoulder, to one of his assistants or a few police sergeants or somebody like that, "Take him away" And that was the end of Diamond Jack, and yet another triumph for S. Poole, the young detective whose exploits were rivaling even those of the Boy Aviators And having thus refreshed himself, Stanley replaced the round ruler and condescended to perform one or two more of those monotonous and trifling actions that Messrs. Twigg and Dersingham demanded of him at this hour of the morning.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

FIRST DAY AT RANDELL'S

THE preliminaries of Michael's career at St James' Preparatory School passed in a dream-like confusion of thought and action. First of all he waited anxiously in the Headmaster's study in an atmosphere of morocco-leather and large waste-paper baskets As in every other room in which Michael had waited, whether of dentist or doctor, the outlook from the window was gloomy and the prospect within was depressing He was glad when Mr. Randell led him and several other boys towards the First Form, where in a dream peopled by the swinging legs of many boys, he learnt from a scarlet book that while Cornelia loved Julia, Julia returned Cornelia's affection. When this fact was established in both English and Latin, all

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the boys shuffled to their desks and the record of a great affection was set down largely and painfully.

1. Cornelia Juliam amat.
- 2 Julia Corneliham amat

Blotted and smudged and sprawling though it ultimately appeared, Michael felt a great satisfaction in having dealt successfully with two nominatives, two accusatives and a verb. The first part of the morning passed away quickly in the history of this simple love. At eleven o'clock a shrill electric bell throbbed through the school, and Michael, almost before he knew what was happening, was carried in a torrent of boys towards the playground. Michael had never felt supreme loneliness, even at night, until he stood in the middle of that green prairie of recreation, distinguishing nobody, a very small creature in a throng of chattering giants. Some of these giants, who usually walked about arm-in-arm, approached him.

"Hullo, are you a new kid?"

Michael breathed his "yes."

"What's your name?"

With an effort Michael remembered Rodber's warning and replied simply

"Fane."

"What's your Christian name?"

This was a terribly direct attack, and Michael was wondering whether it would be best to run quickly out of the playground, to keep silence or to surrender the information, when the quick and authoritative voice of Rodber flashed from behind him

"Fish and find out, young Biden."

"Who are you calling young, young Rodber?"

"You," said Rodber. "So you'd jolly well better scoot off and leave this kid alone."

"Church said I was to collar all the new kids for his army," Biden explained.

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"Did he? Well, this kid's in our army, so sucks! And you can tell young Church that Pearson and me are going to jolly well lam him at four o'clock," announced Rodber very fiercely

"Why don't you tell him yourself?" asked Biden, whose teeth seemed to project farther and farther from his mouth as his indignation grew

"All right, toothy Biden," jeered Rodber. "We'll tell the whole of your rotten army at four o'clock, when we give you the biggest lamming you've ever had. Come on, young Fane," he went on, and Michael, somewhat perturbed by the prospect of being involved in these encounters, followed at his heels

"Look here," said Rodber presently, "you'd better come and show yourself to Pearson. He's the captain of our army, and for goodness' sake look a bit cheerful"

Michael forced an uncomfortable grin such as photographers conjure

Under the shade of a gigantic tree stood Pearson, the leader, eating a small and very unripe pear

"Hullo, Pinky," he drawled

"I say, Pearson," said Rodber in a reverent voice, "I know this kid at home. He's awfully keen to be allowed to join your army."

Pearson scarcely glanced at Michael

"All right. Swear him in. I've got a new oath written down in a book at home, but he can take the old one"

Pearson yawned and threw away the core of the pear

"He's awfully glad he's going to join your army, Pearson. Aren't you, young Fane?"

"Yes, awfully glad," Michael echoed

"It's the best army," said Pearson simply.

"Oh, easily," Rodber agreed. "I say, Pearson, that kid Biden said Church was going to lam you at four o'clock"

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The offended Pearson swallowed a large piece of a second unripe pear and scowled.

"Did he? Tell the army to line up behind the lav at four o'clock."

Rodber's eyes gleamed

"I say, Pearson, I've got an awfully ripping plan. Supposing we ambush them"

"How?" inquired the commander.

"Why, supposing we put young Fane and two or three more new kids by the tuckshop door and tell them to run towards the haunted house, we could cop them simply rippingly."

"Give the orders before afternoon school," said Pearson curtly, and just then the bell for "second hour" sounded

"Wait for me at half-past twelve," Rodber shouted to Michael as he ran to get into school

Michael grew quite feverish during "second hour" and his brain whirled with the imagination of battles, so that the landing of Julius Caesar seemed of minor importance. Tuckshops and haunted houses and doors and ambushes and the languid pale-faced Pearson occupied his thoughts fully enough. At a quarter-past twelve Mr Whichelo, the First Form master, told Michael and the other new boys to go to the book-room and get their school caps, and at half-past twelve Michael waited outside on the yellow gravel for Rodber, splendidly proud of himself in a blue cap crested with a cockleshell worked in silver wire. He was longing to look at himself in the glass at home and to show Miss Carthew and Stella and Nanny and Cook and Gladys his school cap

However, before he could go home Rodber took him round to where the tuckshop ambush would ensue at four o'clock. He showed him a door in a wall which led apparently into the narrow shady garden of an empty house next to the school. He

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explained how Michael was to hang about outside this door and when the Churchites demanded his presence, he told him that he was to run as hard as he could down the garden towards the house.

"We'll do the rest," said Rodber. "And now cut off home."

As soon as Michael was inside Number 64 he rushed upstairs to his bedroom and examined himself critically in the looking-glass. Really the new cap made a great difference. He seemed older somehow and more important. He wished that his arms and legs were not so thin, and he looked forward to the time when like Rodber he would wear Etons. However, his hair was now pleasantly and inconspicuously straight. he had already seen boys woefully teased on account of their curls, and Michael congratulated himself that generally his dress and appearance conformed with the fashion of the younger boys' dress at Randell's. It would be terrible to excite notice. In fact, Michael supposed that to excite notice was the worst sin anybody could possibly commit. He hoped he would never excite notice. He would like to remain perfectly ordinary, and very slowly by an inconspicuous and gradual growth he would thus arrive in time at the dignity and honour enjoyed by Rodber, and perhaps even to the sacred majesty that clung to Pearson. Already he was going to take an active part in the adventures of school; and he felt sorry for the boys who without Rodber's influence would mildly go straight home at four o'clock.

Indeed, Michael set out for afternoon school in a somewhat elated frame of mind, and when he turned into the school-yard, wearing the school cap, he felt bold enough to watch a game of Conquerors that was proceeding between two solemn-faced boys. He thought that to try to crack a chestnut hanging on a piece of string with another chestnut similarly sus-

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pended was a very enthralling pastime, and he was much upset when one of the solemn-faced antagonists suddenly grabbed his new school cap and put it in his pocket and, without paying any attention to Michael, went on with the game as if nothing had happened. Michael had no idea how to grapple with the situation and felt inclined to cry

"I say, give me my cap," he said at last.

The solemn-faced boys went on in silence with the game.

"I say, please give me my cap," Michael asked again.

No notice was taken of his appeal and Michael, looking round in despair, saw Rodber. He ran up to him

"I say, Rodber, that boy over there has got my cap," he said

"Well, don't come sneaking to me, you young ass. Go and smack his head "

"Am I to really ? " asked Michael.

"Of course "

Michael was not prepared to withstand Rodber's advice, so he went up to the solemn-faced boy and hit him as hard as he could. The solemn-faced boy was so much surprised by this attack that he did not for a moment retaliate, and it was only his friend's gasp, "I say, what fearful cheek," that restored him to a sense of what had happened.

In a moment Michael found himself lying on his back and almost smothered by the solemn-faced boy's whole body and presently suffering agony from the pressure of the solemn-faced boy's knees upon his arms pinioned crosswise. Excited voices chattered about him from an increasing circle. He heard the solemn-faced boy telling his horrified auditors that a new kid has smacked his head. He heard various punishments strongly recommended, and at last with

FACT AND FICTION

a sense of relief he heard the quick authoritative voice of the ubiquitous Rodber

"Let him get up, young Plummer. A fight ' A fight ' "

Plummer got up, as he was told, and Michael, in a circle of eager faces, found himself confronted by Plummer.

"Go on," shouted Rodber. "I'm backing you, young Fane "

Michael lowered his head and charged desperately forward for the honour of Rodber , but a terrible pain in his nose and another in his arm and a third in his chin brought tears and blood together in such quantity that Michael would have liked to throw himself on to the grass and weep his life out, too weak to contend with solemn-faced boys who snatched caps

Then over his misery he heard Rodber cry, "That's enough It's not fair Give him back his cap " The crowd broke up except for a few admirers of Rodber, who was telling Michael that he had done tolerably well for a new kid Michael felt encouraged, and ventured to point out that he had not really blabbed

"You cocky young ass," said Rodber crushingly "I suppose you mean ' blubbed ' "

Michael was overwhelmed by this rebuke and, wishing to hide his shame in a far corner of the field, turned away But Rodber called him back and spoke pleasantly, so that Michael forgot the snub and wandered for the rest of the dinner-hour in Rodber's wake, with aching nose, but with a heart beating in admiration and affection.

COMPTON MACKENZIE

HISTORY

A TIGHT CORNER

SEVERELY as Malchus had trained himself in every exercise, he found it at first difficult to support the fatigues of such a life, but every day his muscles hardened, and by the end of the campaign he was able to keep on foot as long as the hardiest of his men.

One day he had followed a party of the tribesmen far up among the mountains. The enemy had scattered, and the Arabs in their hot pursuit had also broken up into small parties. Malchus kept his eye upon the man who appeared to be the chief of the enemy's party, and, pressing hotly upon him, brought him to bay on the face of a steep and rugged gorge. Only one of the Numidians was at hand, a man named Nessus, who was greatly attached to his young leader, and always kept close to him in his expeditions. The savage, a bulky and heavy man, finding he could no longer keep ahead of his fleet-footed pursuers, took his post at a narrow point in the path where but one could oppose him, and there, with his heavy sword drawn, he awaited the attack. Malchus advanced to meet him, sword in hand, when an arrow from Nessus whizzed past him and struck the chief in the throat, and his body fell heavily down the rocks.

"That is not fair," Malchus said angrily. "I would fain have fought him hand to hand."

The Arab bowed his head.

"My lord," he said, "the combat would not have been even, the man had the upper ground, and you would have fought at a grievous disadvantage. Why

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should you risk your life in a fight with the swords, when my arrow has answered all purposes ? What should I have said if I had gone back without you ? What satisfaction would it have been to me to avenge your fall ? What would they have said to me when I told them that I looked on idly while you engaged in such a struggle ? Valour is valour, and we all know that my lord is the bravest among us , but the life of the cousin of our general is too valuable to be risked for nought when we are embarked upon a great enterprise ”

“ Look, Nessus ! what is there ? ” Malchus exclaimed, his attention attracted by a dark object which was crossing the narrow path some distance ahead and ascending the steep side of the gorge “ It is a bear, let us follow him , his flesh will form a welcome change for the company to-night.”

The bear, who had been prowling in the bottom of the ravine, had been disturbed by the fall of the body of the savage near him, and started hastily to return to its abode, which lay high up on the face of the cliff Malchus and his companion hurried forward to the spot where it had crossed the path The way was plain enough , there were scratches on the rock, and the bushes growing in the crevices were beaten down The path had evidently been frequently used by the animal

“ Look out, my lord ! ” Nessus exclaimed as Malchus hurried along “ These bears of the Pyrenees are savage brutes See that he does not take you un-awares ”

The rocks were exceedingly steep , and Malchus with his bow in his hand and the arrow fitted and ready to draw, climbed on, keeping his eyes on every clump of bush lest the bear should be lurking there At last he paused They had reached a spot now but a short distance from the top. The cliff here fell

A TIGHT CORNER

almost perpendicularly down, and along its face was a narrow ledge scarcely a foot wide. Along this it was evident the bear had passed.

"I should think we must be near his den now, Nessus. I trust this ledge widens out before it gets there. It would be an awkward place for a conflict, for a stroke of his paw would send one over the edge."

"I shall be close behind you, my lord," said Nessus, whose blood was now up with the chase. "Should you fail to stop him, drop on one knee that I may shoot over you."

For some fifty yards the ledge continued unbroken. Malchus moved along cautiously, with his arrow in the string and his shield shifted round his shoulder, in readiness for instant action. Suddenly, upon turning a sharp corner of the cliff, he saw that it widened ten feet ahead into a sort of platform lying in the angle of the cliff, which beyond it again jutted out. On this platform was a bear, which, with an angry growl, at once advanced towards him. Malchus discharged his arrow, it struck the bear full on the chest and penetrated deeply. With a stroke of his paw the animal broke the shaft asunder and rushed forward. Malchus threw forward the point of his spear, and with his shield on his arm awaited the onset. He struck the bear fairly on the chest, but, as before, it snapped the shaft with its paw, and, rising to its feet, advanced.

"Kneel, my lord!" Nessus exclaimed.

Malchus dropped on one knee, bracing himself as firmly as he could against the rock, and, with his shield above his head and his sword in his hand, awaited the attack of the enraged animal. He heard the twang of the bow behind him; then he felt a mighty blow, which beat down his shield and descended with terrible force upon his helmet, throwing

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him forward on to his face. Then there was a heavy blow on his back ; and it was well for him that he had on backpiece as well as breastplate, or the flesh would have been torn from his shoulder to his loins. As the blow fell there was an angry roar For a moment he felt crushed by a weight which fell upon him. This was suddenly removed, and he heard a crash far below as the bear, pierced to the heart by the Arab's spear, fell over the precipice

Nessus hastened to raise him

" My lord is not hurt, I hope ? "

" In no way, Nessus, thanks to you ; but my head swims and my arm is well-nigh broken with that blow. Who would have thought a beast like that could have struck so hard ? See, he has dented in my helmet, and has bent my shield ! Now, before we go back and search for the body, let us see what its den is like."

" Do you take my spear, my lord , your own is broken, and your bow has gone over the precipice It may be that there is another bear here. Where one is, the other is seldom far off "

They advanced on to the platform, and saw in the corner of the angle a cave extending some distance into the hill As they approached the entrance a deep growl was heard within.

" We had best leave it alone, my lord," Nessus said as they both recoiled a step at the entrance " This is doubtless the female, and these are larger and fiercer than the males."

" I agree with you, Nessus," Malchus said " Were we on other ground I should say let us attack it, but I have had enough of fighting bears on the edge of a precipice. There is as much meat as we can carry ready for us below Besides, the hour is late and the men will be getting uneasy. Moreover, we are but half armed , and we cannot get at her without crawl-

A TIGHT CORNER

ing through that hole, which is scarce three feet high. Altogether, we had best leave her alone ”

While they were speaking the bear began to roar angrily, the deep notes being mingled with a chorus of snarls and whinings which showed that there was a young family with her.

“ Do you go first, Nessus,” Malchus said. “ The rear is the post of honour here, though I fancy the beast does not mean to come out ”

Nessus without a word took the lead, and advanced across the platform towards the corner

As he was in the act of turning it he sprang suddenly back, while an arrow flew past, grazing the corner of the rock

“ There are a score of natives on the path ! ” he exclaimed “ We are in a trap.”

Malchus looked round in dismay. It was evident that some of the natives must have seen the fall of their leader and watched them pursue the bear, and had now closed in behind them to cut off their retreat. The situation was a most unpleasant one. The ledge extended no further than the platform ; below, the precipice fell away sheer down a hundred feet ; above, it rose as high. In the den behind them was the angry bear.

For a moment the two men looked at each other in consternation

“ We are fairly caught, Nessus,” Malchus said “ There is one thing, they can no more attack us than we can attack them. Only one can come round this corner at a time, and we can shoot or spear them as they do so. We are tolerably safe from attack, but they can starve us out ”

“ They can shoot over from the other side of the ravine,” Nessus said ; “ their arrows will carry from the opposite brow easily enough ”

“ Then,” Malchus said firmly, “ we must dispose of

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the bear ; we must have the cave We shall be safe there from their arrows, while, lying at the entrance, we could shoot any that should venture past the corner. First, though, I will blow my horn. Some of our men may be within hearing ”

Malchus pulled forth the horn which he carried. It was useless, being completely flattened with the blow that the bear had struck him.

“ That hope is gone, Nessus,” he said. “ Now let us get the bear to come out as soon as possible, and finish with her. Do you stand at the corner with your arrow ready, in case the natives should try to surprise us, and be ready to aid me when she rushes out ”

Malchus went to the mouth of the den, struck his spear against the side, and threw in some pieces of stone , but, although the growling was deep and continuous, the bear showed no signs of an intention of coming out

The Arab was an old hunter, and he now asked Malchus to take his place with the bow while he drove the bear out He first took off his burnous, cut off several strips from the bottom, knotted them together, and then twisted the strip into a rope Growing out from a crevice in the rock, some three feet above the top of the cave, was a young tree, and round this, close to the root, Nessus fastened one end of his rope, the other he formed into a slip-knot and let the noose fall in front of the cave, keeping it open with two twigs placed across it Then he gathered some brushwood and placed it at the entrance, put a bunch of dried twigs and dead leaves among it, and, striking a light with his flint and steel on some dried fungus, placed this in the middle of the sticks and blew upon it In a minute a flame leapt up “ Now, my lord,” he said, “ be ready with your sword and spear. The beast will be out in a minute ; she cannot stand the smoke.”

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Malchus ran to the corner and looked round. The natives were at a distance along the ledge, evidently with no intention of attacking a foe of whom they felt sure. A taunting shout was raised and an arrow flew towards him, but he instantly withdrew his head and ran back to the platform.

A minute later there was a fierce growl and the bear rushed out. The brushwood was scattered as, checked suddenly in its rush by the noose, the animal rose on its hind-legs. In an instant the spear of Nessus was plunged deeply into it on one side, while Malchus buried his sword to the hilt in its body under the fore-shoulder of the other. Stabbed to the heart, the bear fell prostrate. Nessus repeated his blow, but the animal was dead. Five young bears rushed out after their mother, growling and snapping, but as these were only about a quarter grown they were easily despatched.

"There is a supply of food for a long time," Malchus said cheerfully, "and as there is a drip of water coming down in this angle we shall be able to quench our thirst. Ah! we are just in time."

As he spoke an arrow struck the rock close to them and dropped at their feet. Others came in rapid succession, and looking at the brow of the opposite side of the ravine, they saw a number of natives.

"Pull the bear's body across the mouth of the cave," Malchus said, "it will prevent the arrows which strike the rock in front from glancing in. The little bears will do for food at present."

They were soon in the cave, which opened beyond the entrance and extended some distance into the mountain, it was seven or eight feet wide and lofty enough to stand upright in. Nessus lay down behind the bear, with his bow and arrow, so as to command the angle of the rock. Malchus seated himself farther in the cave, sheltered by the entrance from the arrows.

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which from time to time glanced in at the mouth. Only once did Nessus have to shoot. The natives on the ledge, informed by their comrades on the opposite side of the gorge that their foes had sought refuge in the cave, ventured to advance ; but the moment the first turned the corner he fell over the precipice, transfixed by an arrow from the bow of Nessus, and the rest hastily retreated.

“ Hand me your flint and steel, Nessus, and a piece of fungus. I may as well have a look round the cave ”

A light was soon procured, and Malchus found that the cave extended some forty feet back, narrowing gradually to the end. It had evidently been used for a long time by wild animals. The floor was completely covered with dried bones of various sizes.

As soon as he saw that this was the case Malchus tore off a strip of his linen shirt, and rolling it into a ball set it on fire. On this he piled up small bones, which caught readily, and he soon had a bright and almost smokeless fire. He now took the place of Nessus. The latter skinned and cut up one of the small bears and soon had some steaks broiling over the fire. By this time it was getting dusk without

When the meat was cooked Nessus satisfied his hunger and then sallied out from the cave and took his post as sentry with his spear close to the angle of the rock, as by this time the natives on the opposite side, being no longer able to see in the gathering darkness, had ceased to shoot. Malchus ate his food at his leisure, and then joined his companion.

“ We must get out of here somehow, Nessus. Our company will search for us to-morrow, but they might search for a week without finding us here ; and, as the army is advancing, they could not spare more than a day, so, if we are to get away, it must be by our own exertions ”

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"I am ready to fight my way along this ledge, my lord, if such is your wish. They cannot see us to fire at, and as only one man can stand abreast, their numbers would be of no avail to them."

"Not on the ledge, Nessus, but they would hardly defend that. No doubt they are grouped at the further end, and we should have to fight against overwhelming numbers. No, that is not to be thought of. The only way of escape I can think of would be to let ourselves down the precipice, but our burnouses would not make a rope long enough."

"They would not reach a third of the distance," Nessus replied, shaking his head. "They have been worn some time, and the cloth is no longer strong. It would need a broad strip to support us."

"That is so, Nessus, but we have materials for making the rope long enough, nevertheless."

"I do not understand you, my lord. Our other garments would be of but little use."

"Of no use at all, Nessus, and I was not thinking of them, but we have the skins of the bears—the hide of the old bear at least is thick and tough—and a narrow strip would bear our weight."

"Of course," Nessus said. "How stupid of me not to think of it, for in the desert we make all our rope of twisted slips of hide. If you will stand sentry here, I will set about it at once."

Malchus took the spear, and Nessus at once set to work to skin the bear, and when that was done, he cut long strips from the hide, and having fastened them together, twisted them into a rope.

The burnouses—which when on the march were rolled up and worn over one shoulder like a scarf, as the German and Italian soldiers carry their blankets in modern times—were also cut up and twisted, and in three hours Nessus had a rope, which he assured Malchus was long enough to reach to the bottom of

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the precipice, and sufficiently strong to bear their weight

One end was fastened to the trunk of the young tree, and the rope was then thrown over the edge of the platform. One of the young bears' skins was fastened round and round it, at the point where it crossed the edge of the rocky platform, to prevent it from being cut when the weight was put upon it, and they then prepared for their descent

"Do you go first," Malchus said. "As soon as I feel that the rope is loose, I will follow you."

The Arab swung himself off the edge, and in a very short time Malchus felt the rope slacken. He followed at once. The first twenty feet the descent was absolutely perpendicular, but after that the rock inclined outward in a steep but pretty regular slope. Malchus was no longer hanging by the rope, but throwing the principal portion of his weight still upon it, and placing his feet on the inequalities of the rock, he made his way down without difficulty. Presently he stood by Nessus at the foot of the slope.

"We had better make up the ravine. There will be numbers of them at its mouth. We can see the glow of their fires from here."

"But we may not be able to find a way up," Nessus said, "the sides seem to get steeper and steeper, and we may find ourselves caught in a trap at the end of this gorge."

"At any rate we will try that way first. I wish the moon was up, it is as black as a wolf's mouth here, and the bottom of the gorge is all covered with boulders. If we stumble, and our arms strike a stone, it will be heard by the natives on the opposite heights."

They now set forward, feeling their way with the greatest care; but in the dense darkness the task of making their way among the boulders was difficult in the extreme. They had proceeded but a short dis-

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tance when a loud yell rose from the height above them. It was repeated again and again, and was answered by shouts from the opposite side, and from the mouth of the ravine.

"By Astarte!" Malchus exclaimed, "they have found out that we have escaped already."

It was so. One of the natives had crept forward along the path, hoping to find the sentry asleep, or to steal up noiselessly and stab him. When he got to the angle of the rock, he could see no form before him, nor hear the slightest sound. Creeping forward, he found the platform deserted. He listened attentively at the entrance to the cave, and the keen ear of the savage would have detected had any been slumbering there, but all was still.

He rose to his feet with the intention of creeping into the cave, when his head struck against something. He put up his hand and felt the rope, and saw how the fugitives had escaped. He at once gave the alarm to his comrades. In a minute or two a score of men with blazing brands came running along the path. On seeing the rope, they entered the cave, and found that their prey had really escaped.

Malchus and his companion had not moved after the alarm was given.

"We had better be going, my lord," the Arab said as he saw the men with torches retracing their steps along the brow. "They will soon be after us."

"I think not, Nessus. Their chance of finding us among these boulders in the dark would be small, and they would offer such good marks to our arrows that they would hardly enter upon it. No, I think they will wait till daybreak, planting a strong force at the mouth of the ravine, and along both sides of the end, wherever an ascent could be made. Hark, the men on the heights there are calling to others along the brow."

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"Very well, my lord," Nessus said, seating himself on a rock, "then we will sell our lives as dearly as possible."

"I hope it has not come to that, Nessus. There is a chance of safety for us yet. The only place they are not likely to look for us is the cave, and, as we have climbed down from above with the rope, there will be no difficulty in ascending."

Nessus gave an exclamation, which expressed at once admiration of his leader's idea and gratification at the thought of escape. They began without delay to retrace their steps, and after some trouble again found the rope.

Nessus mounted first, his bare feet enabled him to grip any inequality of the surface of the rock. Whenever he came to a ledge which afforded him standing room he shook the rope, and waited until Malchus joined him.

At last they stood together at the foot of the perpendicular rock at the top. The lightly armed Arab found no difficulty whatever in climbing the rope, but it was harder work for Malchus, encumbered with the weight of his armour. The numerous knots, however, helped him, and when he was within a few feet of the top, Nessus seized the rope and hauled it up by sheer strength until Malchus was level with the top. Then he gave him his hand, and assisted him to gain his feet. They entered the cave and made their way to the farther end, and there threw themselves down. They had not long been there when they saw a flash of light at the mouth of the cave and heard voices.

Malchus seized his spear and would have leapt to his feet, but Nessus pressed his hand on his shoulder.

"They are come for the she-bear," he said. "It is not likely they will enter."

Lying hidden in the darkness the fugitives watched

THE SIEGE OF ALESIA

the natives roll the bear over, tie its legs together, and put a stout pole through them. Then four men lifted the pole on their shoulders and started.

Another holding a brand entered the cave. The two fugitives held their breath, and Nessus sat with an arrow in the string ready to shoot. The brand, however, gave but a feeble light, and the native, picking up the bodies of three of the young bears which lay close to the entrance, threw them over his shoulder and crawled back out of the cave again. As they heard his departing footsteps the fugitives drew a long breath of relief.

G. A. HENTY

THE SIEGE OF ALESIA

ALESIA stands on a hill sloping off all round, with steep and, in places, precipitous sides. It lies between two small rivers, the Ose and the Oserain, both of which fall into the Brenne, and thence into the Seine. Into this peninsula, with the rivers on each side of him, Vercingetorix had thrown himself with eighty thousand men. Alesia was a position of extraordinary strength. There was abundant water. The rivers formed natural trenches. Below the town to the east they ran parallel for three miles through an open alluvial plain before they reached the Brenne. In every other direction rose rocky hills of equal height with the central plateau, originally perhaps one wide tableland, through which the water had ploughed out the valleys. To attack Vercingetorix where he had placed himself was out of the question; but to blockade him there, to capture the leader of the insurrection and his whole army, and so in one blow make an end with it, on a survey of the situation seemed not impossible. The Gauls

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had thought of nothing less than of being besieged. The provisions laid in could not be considerable, and so enormous a multitude could not hold out many days.

At once the legions were set to work cutting trenches or building walls as the form of the ground allowed. Camps were formed at different spots, and twenty-three strong blockhouses at the points which were least defensible. The lines where the circuit was completed were eleven miles long. The part most exposed was the broad level meadow which spread out to the west towards the Brenne river. Vercingetorix had looked on for a time, not understanding what was happening to him. When he did understand it, he made desperate efforts on his side to break the net before it closed about him. But he could do nothing. The Gauls could not face the Roman entrenchments. Their cavalry were cut to pieces by the German horse. The only hope was in help from without, and before the lines were entirely finished horsemen were sent out with orders to ride for their lives into every district in Gaul and raise the entire nation. The crisis had come. If the countrymen of Vercingetorix were worthy of their fathers, if the enthusiasm with which they had risen for freedom was not a mere emotion, but the expression of a real purpose, their young leader called on them to come now, every man of them, and seize Caesar in the trap into which he had betrayed himself. If, on the other hand, they were careless, if they allowed him and his eighty thousand men to perish without an effort to save them, the independence which they had ceased to deserve would be lost for ever. He had food, he bade the messengers say, for thirty days, by thrifty management it might be made to last a few days longer. In thirty days he should look for relief.

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The horsemen sped away like the bearers of the fiery cross. Caesar learnt from deserters that they had gone out, and understood the message which they carried. Already he was besieging an army far outnumbering his own. If he persevered, he knew that he might count with certainty on being attacked by a second army immeasurably larger. But the time allowed for the collection of so many men might serve also to prepare for their reception. Vercingetorix said rightly that the Romans won their victories, not by superior courage, but by superior science. . . . Caesar knew exactly, to begin with, how long Vercingetorix could hold out. It was easy for him to collect provisions within his lines which would feed his own army a few days longer. Fortifications the same in kind as those which prevented the besieged from breaking out would serve equally to keep the assailants off. His plan was to make a second line of works—an exterior line as well as an interior line, and as the extent to be defended would thus be doubled, he made them of a peculiar construction, to enable one man to do the work of two. There is no occasion to describe the rows of ditches, dry and wet, the staked pitfalls, the cervi, pronged instruments like the branching horns of a stag, the stimuli, barbed spikes treacherously concealed to impale the unwary and hold him fast when caught, with which the ground was sown in irregular rows, the vallus and the lorica, and all the varied contrivances of Roman engineering genius. . . . Enough that the work was done within the time, the legions keeping in perfect good humour, and jesting on their commander's ingenuity. Vercingetorix now and then burst out on the working parties, but produced no effect. They knew what they were to expect when the thirty days were out; but they knew their leader, and had absolute confidence in his judgment. . . .

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The day of expected deliverance dawned at last Five miles beyond the Brenne the dust-clouds of the approaching host were seen, and then the glitter of their lances and their waving pennons They swam the river They filled the plain below the town From the heights of Alesia the whole scene lay spread under the feet of the besieged. Vercingetorix came down on the slope to the edge of the first trench, prepared to cross when the turn of battle should give him a chance to strike. Caesar sent out his German horse, and stood himself watching and directing from the spur of an adjoining hill The Gauls had brought innumerable archers with them The horse flinched slightly under the showers of arrows, and shouts of triumph rose from the lines of the town, but the Germans rallied again, sent the cavalry of the Gauls flying, and hewed down the unprotected archers. Vercingetorix fell back sadly to his camp on the hill, and then for a day there was a pause The relieving army had little food with them, and, if they acted at all, must act quickly They scattered over the country collecting faggots to fill the trenches, and making ladders to storm the walls At midnight they began their assault on the lines in the plain; and Vercingetorix, hearing by the cries that the work had begun, gave his own signal for a general sally The Roman arrangements had been completed long before Every man knew his post The slings, the crossbows, the scorpions, were all at hand and in order Mark Antony and Caius Trebonius had each a flying division under them to carry help where the pressure was most severe The Gauls were caught on the cervi, impaled on the stimuli, and fell in heaps under the bolts and balls which were poured from the walls They could make no impression, and fell back at day-break beaten and dispirited. Vercingetorix had been unable even to pass the moats and trenches, and did

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not come into action till his friends had abandoned the attack

The advantage of the Gauls lay in their enormous numbers. The Romans were distributed in a ring now fourteen miles in extent. On the north side, beyond the Ose, the works were incomplete, owing to the nature of the ground, and their lines lay on the slope of the hills descending towards the river. Sixty thousand picked men left the Gauls' camp before dawn, they stole round by a distant route, and remained concealed in a valley till the middle of the day. At noon they came over the ridge at the Roman's back; and they had the best of the position, being able to attack from above. Their appearance was the signal for a general assault on all sides, and for a determined sally by Vercingetorix from within. Thus before, behind, and everywhere, the legions were assailed at the same moment; and Caesar observes that the cries of battle in the rear are always more trying to men than the fiercest onset upon them in front; because what they cannot see they imagine more formidable than it is, and they depend for their own safety on the courage of others.

Caesar had taken his stand where he could command the whole action. There was no smoke in those engagements, and the scene was transparently visible. Both sides felt that the deciding trial had come. In the plain the Gauls made no more impression than on the preceding day. At the weak point on the north the Romans were forced down the slope, out of their positions. Caesar saw the peril, and sent Labienus with six cohorts to their help. Vercingetorix had seen it also, and attacked the interior lines at the same spot. Decimus Brutus was then despatched also, and then Caius Fabius. Finally, when the fighting grew desperate, he left his own station; he called up the reserves which had not yet been engaged, and

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he rode across the field, conspicuous in his scarlet dress and with his bare head, cheering on the men as he passed each point where they were engaged, and hastening to the scene where the chief danger lay. He sent round a few squadrons of horse to the back of the hills which the Gauls had crossed in the morning. He himself joined Labienus. Wherever he went he carried enthusiasm along with him. The legionaries flung away their darts and rushed upon the enemy sword in hand. The cavalry appeared above on the heights. The Gauls wavered, broke, and scattered. The German horse were among them, hewing down the brave but now helpless patriots who had come with such high hopes and had fought so gallantly. Out of the sixty thousand that had sallied forth in the morning, all but a draggled remnant lay dead on the hill-sides. Seventy-four standards were brought in to Caesar. The besieged retired into Alice again in despair. The vast hosts that were to have set them free melted away. In the morning they were streaming over the country, making back for their homes, with Caesar's cavalry behind them, cutting them down and capturing them in thousands.

The work was done. The most daring feat in the military annals of mankind had been successfully accomplished. A Roman army which could not at the utmost have amounted to fifty thousand men had held blockaded an army of eighty thousand—not weak Asiatics, but European soldiers, as strong and as brave individually as the Italians were, and they had defeated, beaten, and annihilated another army which had come expecting to overwhelm them, five times as large as their own.

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

“’T WAS THERE THAT WE PARTED——”

“’T WAS THERE THAT WE PARTED——”

ARCHIE shook his head with a little smile which said that resistance would be of no use ; that their only hope lay in keeping perfectly quiet But Ewen would not take the weapon back

The men outside could be heard fumbling over the door for the means of opening it, which, naturally, they could not find.

“Curse it, there’s no way to open this door !” Kicks and blows were bestowed upon it “Come out of it, rebel !”

“If ye’re in there !” added the other voice with a snigger

“There ain’t no means of knowing that till we get the door open,” said the first voice

“If there was a lock we could blow it open, but there ain’t none”

“Do you stay and watch the place, then, and I’ll be off and fetch the captain , he ain’t far off now”

“And while you’re doing that the rebel will burst out and murder me and be off ! Maybe, too, there’s more than this Doctor Cameron in there !”

“You’re a good-plucked one, ain’t you !” observed the first voice scornfully “You go for Captain Craven then , and I’ll warrant no one comes out of this hut without getting something from this that’ll stop his going far !” By the sound, he smacked the butt of his musket

“Good ! I’ll not be long, then, I promise you” The speaker could be heard to run off, and the man who remained, either to keep up his courage or to advertise his presence, began to whistle

Ewen and his cousin looked into each other’s eyes, fearing even to whisper, and each read the same answer to the same question If they attempted to break

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out and run for it before the captain and the main body came up, it was beyond question that, since they could not suddenly throw open the door, but must first pull down their barricade, at the cost of time and noise, the man outside, forewarned by their movements, could shoot one or both as they dashed out. Moreover, wounded or unwounded, they would undoubtedly be in worse case in the open, the alarm once given by a shot, than if they remained perfectly silent, "as close as weasels," in their hiding-place. There was always a chance that the officer, when he came, would pooh-pooh the idea of anyone's being inside the deserted-looking little structure and would not have the door broken open . . . even, perhaps, a chance that he would not bring his men there at all.

But it was a hard thing to do, to sit there and wait to be surrounded.

It was too hard for Ewen. After four or five minutes he put his lips to Archie's ear. "I am going to open the door and rush out on him," he breathed. "I have another pistol. He will probably chase me, and then you can get away." He had brought off that same manœuvre successfully once—why not again?

But Archie clutched his arm firmly. "No, you shall not do it! And in any case . . . I think it is too late!" For the musician outside had ceased in the middle of a bar, and next instant was to be heard shouting, "This way, sir—in the clearing here!"

Then there was the tramp of a good many feet, coming at the double. Oh, what did it matter in that moment to Ewen if the Cause were once more sinking in a bog of false hopes! For the safety of the man beside him, whom he loved, he would have bartered any levies that ever were to sail from Prussia or Sweden. But the issue was not in his hands.

"Why were we so crazy as to come in here!" he

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murmured under his breath. “O God, that I had never seen this hut !”

Archibald Cameron had loosed his arm. He still held the pistol, but in a manner which suggested that he did not mean to use it. From the orders which they could hear being given, the hut was now surrounded. The door was then pushed at hard from without, but as before, when it had been attempted, it would not budge an inch.

“Did you hear any sound within while you kept watch, Hayter ?” asked the officer’s voice.

“No, sir, I can’t say that I did.”

“Yet the door is evidently made fast from within. It is difficult to see how that can be unless someone is still inside. There is no window or other opening, is there, out of which a man could have got after fastening the door ?”

“No, sir,” was shouted, apparently from the back of the hut.

“Forbye the hole there’ll be in the thatch for letting out the reek, sir,” suggested another voice, and a Scottish voice at that.

“But a man would hardly get out that way,” answered the officer. “No, there’s nothing for it but to break in the door.”

Two or three musket butts were vigorously applied with this intention, but in another moment the officer’s voice was heard ordering the men to stop, and in the silence which ensued could be heard saying, “Aye, an excellent notion ! Then we shall know for certain, and save time and trouble. One of you give him a back.”

The two motionless men inside looked dumbly at each other. What was going to happen now ? A scrambling sound was heard against the log wall of the hut, and Archie pointed mutely upwards. They were sending a man to climb up and look in through the hole left for the smoke.

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Ewen ground his teeth. They had neither of them thought of that simple possibility. The game was up, then, they could do nothing against such a survey. His cousin, however, possibly from previous experience in "skulking," advised in dumb show one precaution—pulling Ewen's sleeve to attract his attention, he bowed his head until it rested on his folded arms, thrusting his hands at the same moment out of sight. For a moment Ewen thought that the object of this posture was to escape actual identification, not very probable anyhow in the semi-darkness, then he realised that its purpose was that the lighter line of their faces and hands should not be discernible to the observer. For a second or two he dallied with an idea which promised him a grim satisfaction—that of firing upwards at the blur of a face which would shortly, he supposed, peer in at that fatal aperture in the thatch. But to do that would merely be to advertise their presence. So he followed Archibald Cameron's example, and they sat there, rigid and huddled upon themselves, trusting that in the bad light they would, after all, be invisible. And if so, then, to judge from the officer's words, the latter would be convinced of the emptiness of the hut and would draw off the party without breaking in the door. O God, if it might be so, if it might be so!

The scrambling sound had reached the thatch now. Half of Ewen's mind was praying for Archie's life, the other wrestling with a perverse inclination to glance up. And, queerly mingled with that impulse, came a memory of his childish interpretation of the text, "Thou, God, seest me," when he used to picture a gigantic eye looking down through his bedroom ceiling. Eternities of waiting seemed to spread out, and then, abruptly, to collapse like a shut fan with the jubilant shout from above. "He's there, Captain, and there's two of them! I can see them plain!"

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By the sound, the speaker slid down with the words from his post, and, almost simultaneously too, came another blow on the door, and the ritual command, “Open in the King’s name !”

The cousins both lifted their heads now, and Archie, hopeful to the last, laid a finger on his lips. The order was repeated, then, as if uncontrollably, blows began to rain on the door.

“Come out and surrender yourselves !” called the officer’s voice sternly, and another shouted, “Use that log there, ye fools—’tis heavier than the butts !” and yet another cried excitedly, “What if we was to fire the thatch, sir ?”

And at that, quite suddenly, the battle madness of the Highlands, the *mure chatha*, came upon Ewen Cameron, and he went Berserk. This was to be a trapped beast, an otter at bay. “an otter, any beast shows fight then ! Did the Redcoats anticipate coming in unhindered to take them, or that they, Highlanders both, would tamely suffer themselves to be burnt out ? He sprang up. Archie had got up too, and was holding out his hand to him and saying, through the hail of blows upon wood which almost drowned his words, “My dearest lad, I hope they’ll let *you* go free !”

From his kinsman’s action this seemed unlikely in the extreme. Thrusting the second pistol at Doctor Cameron with “Take this too—I’ll need both hands !” Ewen seized the great rusty axe from the corner and flung himself against the barricaded portal just as one of the up-ended logs which wedged it slipped and fell, dislodged by the blows under which the door was quivering, and set against it the living prop of his own shoulder.

“Ewen, Ewen,” besought his companion in great distress, “’tis useless—worse than useless ! My time has come !” But Ardroy did not even seem to hear

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him, leaning with all the might of his strong body against the door, his right hand gripping the axe, his left arm outspread across the wood trying to get a hold on the logs of the wall beyond the hinges.

Suddenly a crackling above showed that the suggestion just made had been carried out, and the roof-thatch fired, probably by a brand flung upwards. The thatch, however, was damp and burnt sullenly ; yet in a moment or two some eddies of smoke, caught by the wind, drifted in through the aperture. Then the flame caught, perhaps a drier patch, and a sudden thick wave of smoke, acrid and stifling, drove downwards in the gloom as though looking for the fugitives. But already the door was beginning to splinter in several places. The assailants seemed to guess that it was buttressed now with the body of one of the besieged. "Stand away from that door, you within there," shouted the officer, "or I fire!"

"Fire, then" said Ewen under his breath. "Get back, Archie, *get back!*"

But, instead of a bullet, there came stabbing through one of the newly made breaches in the door, like a snake, a tongue of steel, bayonet or sword. It caught Ewen just behind and below the shoulder pressed against the door, a trifle more to one side and it might have gone through the armpit into the lung. As it was, it slid along his shoulder-blade. Involuntarily Ardroy sprang away from the door, as involuntarily dropping the axe and clapping his right hand to the seat of the hot, searing pain.

"Are you hurt?" exclaimed his cousin. "Oh Ewen, for God's sake——"

"They are not going to take you as easily as they think!" said Ewen between his teeth, and, with the blood running down his back under his shirt, he pounced on the fallen axe again. The door shivered all over, and by the time he had recovered his weapon

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he saw that it was giving, and that nothing could save it. He pushed Archie, still imploring him to desist, roughly away. “Keep out of sight, for God’s sake !” he whispered hoarsely, and, gripping the axe with both hands, stood back a little the better to swing it, and also to avoid having the door collapse upon him.

In another moment it fell inwards with a bang and a noise of rending hinges, and there was revealed, as in a frame, the group of scarlet-clad figures with their eager faces, the glitter of weapons, the tree-trunks beyond. And to those soldiers who had rushed to the dark entrance Cameron of Ardroy was also visible, against the gloom and smoke within, towering with the axe ready, his eyes shining with a light more daunting even than the weapon he held. They hesitated and drew back.

The officer whipped out his sword and came forward.

“Put down that axe, you madman, and surrender Archibald Cameron to the law !”

“Archibald Cameron is not here !” shouted back Ewen. “But you come in at your peril !”

None the less, whether he trusted in his own superior quickness with his slighter weapon, or thought that the rebel would not dare to use his, Captain Craven advanced. And neither of these hypotheses would have saved him. . though he was saved (luckily for Ewen). For the Highlander in his transport had forgotten the small proportions of the place in which he stood, and his own height and reach of arm. The smashing two-handed blow which he aimed at the Englishman never touched him, with a thud which shook the doorway, the axe buried itself in the lintel above it ; and as Ewen with a curse tried to wrench it out, the haft, old and rotten, came away in his hand, leaving the head embedded above the doorway, and himself weaponless.

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As he saw the axe sweeping down towards him the young officer had naturally sprung back, and now, before Ewen had time to recover himself, the sergeant rushed past his superior and seized Ardroy round the body, trying to drag him out. As they struggled with each other—all danger from the axe being now over—another man slipped in, got behind the pair, and raised his clubbed musket. Archie sprang at the invader and grabbed at his arm, and though he only half caught it, his act did diminish the fierce impact of the blow, and probably saved Ewen from having his head split open. As it was, the musket butt felled him instantly, his knees gave, and, with a stifled cry, he toppled over in the sergeant's hold, his weight bringing the soldier down with him.

But the Redcoat got up again at once, while Ewen, with blood upon his hair, lay face downwards across the fallen door, the useless axe shaft still clutched in one hand; and it was over his motionless body that Archibald Cameron was brought out of his last refuge.

D K. BROSTER

THE DEFENCE OF THE FORT

THERE had been hot fighting before Presqu' Isle was taken. Could courage have saved it, it would never have fallen. The fort stood near the site of the present town of Erie, on the southern shore of the lake which bears the same name. At one of its angles was a large blockhouse, a species of structure much used in the petty forest warfare of the day. It was two stories in height, and solidly built in massive timber, the diameter of the upper story exceeding that of the lower by several feet, so that, through openings in the projecting floor of the former, the defenders

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could shoot down upon the heads of an enemy assailing the outer wall below. The roof, being covered with shingles, might easily be set on fire ; but to guard against this, there was an opening at the summit, through which the garrison, partially protected by a covering of plank, might pour down water upon the flames. This blockhouse stood on a projecting point of land, between the lake and a small brook which entered it nearly at right angles. Unfortunately, the bank of the brook rose in a high, steep ridge, within forty yards of the blockhouse, thus affording a cover for assailants, while the bank of the lake offered similar facilities on another side.

At early dawn on the fifteenth of June, the garrison of Presqu' Isle were first aware of the enemy's presence, and when the sun rose, they saw themselves surrounded by two hundred Indians, chiefly from the neighbourhood of Detroit. At the first alarm, they abandoned the main body of the fort, and betook themselves to the blockhouse as a citadel. The Indians, crowding together in great numbers, under cover of the rising ground, kept up a rattling fire, and not only sent their bullets into every loophole and crevice, but shot fire-arrows upon the roof, and threw balls of burning pitch against the walls. Again and again the building took fire, and again and again the flames were extinguished.

The Indians now rolled logs to the top of the ridges, where they constructed three strong breastworks, from behind which they could discharge their shot and throw their fire-balls with still greater effect. Some of them tried to dart across the intervening space, and shelter themselves in the ditch which surrounded the fort ; but all of these were killed or wounded in the attempt. And now the defenders could see the Indians throwing up earth and stones, behind one of the breastworks. Their implacable foes were

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labouring to undermine the blockhouse, a sure and insidious expedient, against which there was no defence. There was little leisure to reflect on this new peril, for another more imminent and horrible soon threatened them. The barrels of water, always kept in the blockhouse, were nearly emptied in extinguishing the frequent fires, and though there was a well in the parade-ground, yet to approach it would be certain death. The only resource was to dig one in the blockhouse itself. The floor was torn up, and while some of the men fired their heated muskets from the loopholes, to keep the enemy in check, the rest laboured with desperate energy at this toilsome and cheerless task. Before it was half completed, the roof was again on fire, and all the water that remained was poured down to extinguish it. In a few moments, the cry of fire was once more raised, when a soldier, at imminent risk of his life, tore off the burning shingles, and averted the danger.

By this time it was evening. From earliest day-break, the little garrison had fought and toiled without a moment's rest. Nor did the darkness bring relief, for guns flashed all night long from the Indian entrenchments. They seemed resolved to wear out the obstinate defenders by fatigue; and while some, in their turn, were sleeping, the rest kept up the assault. Morning brought fresh dangers. The well had been for some time complete, and it was happy that it was so, for by this time the enemy had pushed their subterranean approaches as far as the house of the commanding officer, which they immediately set on fire. It stood on the parade, close to the blockhouse; and, as the pine logs blazed fiercely, the defenders were nearly stifled by the heat. The outer wall of the blockhouse scorched, blackened, and at last burst into flame. Still the undespairing garrison refused to yield. Passing up water from the well below, they

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poured it down upon the fire, which at length was happily subdued, while the blazing house soon sank into a glowing heap of embers. The men were now, to use the words of their officer, "exhausted to the greatest extremity", yet they kept up their forlorn and desperate defence, toiling and fighting without pause, within the wooden walls of their dark prison, where the close and heated atmosphere was clogged with the smoke of gunpowder. The fire on both sides continued through the day, and did not cease till midnight; at which hour a voice was heard to call out, in French, from the enemy's entrenchments, warning the garrison that further resistance would be useless, since preparations were made for setting the blockhouse on fire, above and below at once. Christie demanded if there were any among them who spoke English, upon which, a man in the Indian dress came out from behind the breastwork. He was a soldier, who, having been made prisoner early in the French war, had since lived among the savages, and now espoused their cause, fighting with them against their own countrymen. He said that if they yielded, their lives should be spared, but if they fought longer, they must all be burnt alive. Christie, resolving to hold out as long as a shadow of hope remained, told them to wait till morning for his answer. They assented, and suspended their fire, and while some of the garrison watched, the rest sank exhausted into a deep sleep. When morning came, Christie sent out two soldiers, as if to treat with the enemy, but, in reality, to learn the truth of what they had said respecting their preparations to burn the blockhouse. On reaching the breastwork, the soldiers made a signal, by which their officer saw that his worst fears were well founded. In pursuance of their orders, they then demanded that two of the principal chiefs should meet with Christie midway between the breastwork

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and the blockhouse. The chiefs appeared accordingly ; and Christie, going out, yielded up the little fortress which he had defended with such indomitable courage ; having first stipulated that the lives of all the garrison should be spared, and that they might retire unmolested to the nearest post. The soldiers, pale, wild, and haggard, like men who had passed through a fiery ordeal, now issued from the blockhouse, whose sides were pierced with bullets and scorched with fire. In spite of the capitulation, they were surrounded and seized, and, having been detained for some time in the neighbourhood, were sent as prisoners to Detroit, where Ensign Christie soon after made his escape, and gained the fort in safety

FRANCIS PARKMAN

WE ESCAPE

TOWARDS midnight, after we had shut our eyes for an hour to try and induce the sentry to go to sleep, I hit on a plan, which I believe now to have been the only possible solution of the problem. There were six of us and a sentry in a small corridor carriage, so that we were rather crowded ; both racks were full of small baggage, and there was a fair litter on the floor. When the train next went slowly, and when I considered the moment had come, I was to give the word by saying to the sentry, in German of course, "Will you have some food ? We are going to eat." Then followed five or ten minutes of tense excitement, when we tried to keep up a normal conversation but could think of nothing to say. Medicott had the happy thought of giving me some medicine out of his case, which came in most useful, but all he could say was, "It's a snip, you'll do it for a certainty." Suddenly the train began to slow up. "Now ?" I

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said to Buckley, and he nodded, so I leant across and said to the sentry, "Wir wollen essen, wollen Sie etwas nehmen?" Then every one in the carriage with one accord stood up and pulled their stuff off the racks. The sentry also stood up, but was almost completely hidden from the window by a confused mass of men and bags. Buckley and I both stood up on our seats. I slipped the strap of my haversack over my shoulder—we both of us already had on our Burberrys—pushed down the window, put my leg over—and jumped into the night. I fell—not very heavily—on the wires at the side of the track, and lay still in the dark shadow. Three seconds later Buckley came flying out of the window, and seemed to take rather a heavy toss. The end of the train was not yet past me, and we knew there was a man with a rifle in the last carriage, so when Buckley came running along the track calling out to me, I caught him and pulled him into the ditch at the side. The train went by, and its tail lights vanished round a corner and apparently no one saw or heard us.

Sixteenth Night — About 5 o'clock we got into an excellent and safe hiding-place on a steep bank above the road. A mile or so down the road to the west of us was the village of Aach, and we were less than 15 kilometres from the frontier.

We determined to eat the remains of our food and cross that night. I kept, however, about twenty small meat lozenges, for which, as will be seen later on, we were extremely thankful. During our last march we decided that we must walk on the roads as little as possible. Any infantry soldier knows that a cross-country night march on a very dark night over 10 miles of absolutely strange country, with the object of coming on a particular village at the end, is an undertaking of great difficulty.

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We had an illuminated compass, but our only methods of reading a map by night (by the match-light, with the help of a waterproof, as I have previously explained) made it inadvisable to use a map so close to the frontier more often than was absolutely necessary. I therefore learnt the map by heart, and made Buckley, rather against his will, do so too. We had to remember some such rigmarole as: "From cross-roads 300 yards—S W road, railway, river—S to solitary hill on left with village ahead, turn village (Weiterdingen) to left—road S W 500 yards—E round base of solitary hill," etc, etc. Our anxieties were increased by two facts—one being that all the sign-posts within 10 miles of the frontier had been removed, so that if once we lost our way there seemed little prospect of finding it again on a dark night, secondly, the moon rose about midnight, and it was therefore most important, though perhaps not essential, to attempt to cross the frontier before that hour. We left behind us our bags, our spare clothes, and socks, so as to walk as light as possible, and at about 9.30 left our hiding-place.

Seventeenth Night.—The first part of our walk lay through the thick woods north of Aach, in which there was small chance of meeting any one. For two hours on a pitch-dark night we made our way across country, finding the way only by compass and memory of the maps. There were moments of anxiety, but these were instantly allayed by the appearance of some expected landmark. Unfortunately the going was very heavy, and in our weak state we made slower progress than we had hoped. When the moon came up we were still 3 to 4 miles from the frontier.

Should we lie up where we were and try to get across the next night? The idea of waiting another day entirely without food was intolerable, so we pushed on.

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The moon was full and very bright, so that, as we walked across the fields it seemed to us that we must be visible for miles. After turning the village of Weiterdingen we were unable to find a road on the far side which had been marked on my map. This necessitated a study of the map under a mackintosh, the result of which was to make me feel doubtful if we really were where I had thought. It is by no means easy to locate oneself at night from a small-scale map, 1 : 100,000, examined by match-light. However, we adopted the hypothesis that we were where we had thought we were, and disregarding the unpleasant fact that a road was missing, marched on by compass, in a south-west direction, hoping always to hit the village of Riedheim. How we were to distinguish this village from other villages I did not know. Buckley, as always, was an optimist, so on we went, keeping as far as possible under the cover of trees and hedges.

Ahead of us was a valley, shrouded in a thick mist. This might well be the frontier, which at that point followed a small stream on either side of which we believed there were water meadows. At length we came on a good road, and walking parallel with it in the fields, we followed it westwards. If our calculations were correct, this should lead us to the village.

About 1.30 we came on a village. It was a pretty place nestling at the foot of a steep wood-capped hill, with fruit trees and fields, in which harvesting had already begun, all round it. Was it Riedheim? If it was, we were within half a mile of the frontier, and I knew, or thought I knew, from a large-scale map which I had memorised, the lie of the country between Riedheim and the frontier. We crossed the road, and after going about 100 yards came on a single-line railway. I sat down aghast. There was no doubt

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about it—we were lost. I knew there was no railway near Riedheim. For a moment or two Buckley failed to realise the horrible significance of this railway, but he threw a waterproof over my head whilst I had a prolonged study of the map by match-light. I was quite unable to make out where we were. There were, however, one or two villages, through which railways passed, within range of our night's walk. I explained the situation to Buckley, who instantly agreed that we must lie up for another night and try to make out where we were in the morning. It was impossible that we were far from the frontier. Buckley at this time began to show signs of exhaustion from lack of food; so leaving him to collect potatoes, of which there was a field quite close, I went in search of water. After a long search I was not able to find any. We collected thirty to forty potatoes between us, and towards 3 A.M. made our way up the hill behind the village. The hill was very steep, and in our exhausted condition it was only slowly and with great difficulty that we were able to climb it. Three-quarters of the way up, Buckley almost collapsed, so I left him in some bushes and went on to find a suitable place. I found an excellent spot in a thick wood, in which there were no paths or signs that any one entered it. I then returned and fetched Buckley, and we slept till dawn.

At this time I was feeling fitter and stronger than at any time during the previous week. I am unable to explain this, unless it was due to the fact that my feet had quite ceased to hurt me seriously.

At dawn we had breakfast on raw potatoes and meat lozenges which I divided out, and then, sitting just inside the edge of the coppice, tried to make out our position from a close study of the map and the surrounding country. In the distance we could see the west end of Lake Constance, and a compass bear-

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ing on this showed us that we were very close to the frontier. Through the village in front of us there was a railway. There were several villages close to the frontier through which passed railways, and two or three of them had steep hills to the north of them. We imagined successively that the hill we were sitting on was the hill behind each of these villages, and compared the country we could see before us carefully with the map. That part of the country abounds in solitary hills capped with woods, and the difficulty was to find out which one we were sitting on. There was one village, Gottmadingen, with a railway through it, and behind it a hill from which the map showed that the view would be almost identical with that we saw in front of us. Buckley thought we were there. I did not. There were small but serious discrepancies. Then I had a brain wave. We were in Switzerland already, and the village below us was Thaingen. It explained everything — or very nearly. Buckley pointed out one or two things which did not seem to be quite right. Again then, where were we? I think now that we were slightly insane from hunger and fatigue, otherwise we should have realised, without difficulty, where we were, without taking the risk which we did. I don't know what time it was, but it was not till after hours of futile attempt to locate ourselves from the map from three sides of the hill, that I took off my tunic, and in a grey sweater and in grey flannel trousers walked down into the fields and asked a girl, who was making hay, what the name of that village might be. She was a pretty girl in a large sun-bonnet, and after a few preliminary remarks about the weather and the harvest, she told me the name of the village was Riedheim. I must have shown my surprise, for she said, "Why, don't you believe me?" "Naturally, I believe you," I said, "it is better here than in the trenches. I am on leave

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and have walked over from Engen and lost my way. Good day Many thanks ” She gave me a sly look, and I don’t know what she thought, but she only answered, “ Good day,” and went on with her hay-making I walked away, and getting out of her sight, hurried back to Buckley with the good news. “ But how could a railway be there ? ” I thought “ It was made after the map was printed, you fool ” On the way back I had a good look at the country It was all as clear as daylight How I had failed to recognise it before I can’t think, except that it did not look a bit like the country that I had anticipated. There was the Z-shaped stream, which was the guarded frontier, and there, now that I knew where to look for it, I could make out the flash of the sun on a sentry’s bayonet Everything fitted in with my mental picture of the large-scale map The village opposite to us in Switzerland was Barzheim , the little hut with a red roof was the Swiss Alpine Club hut, and was actually on the border between Switzerland and Germany Once past the sentries on the river we should still have 500 yards of Germany to cross before we were safe

The thing to do now was to hide, and hide in the thickest part we could find The girl might have given us away. Anyhow, we knew that the woods near the frontier were usually searched daily Till 4 o’clock we lay quiet, well hidden in thick undergrowth, half-way up the lower slopes of the Hohenstofflen, and then we heard a man pushing his way through the woods and hitting trees and bushes with a stick He never saw us, and we were lying much too close to see him, though he seemed to come within 15 yards of us That danger past, I climbed a tree and took one more look at the lie of the land. Then Buckley and I settled down to get our operation orders for the night. For half an hour we sat on the edge of

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the wood, waiting for it to become quite dark before we started

Eighteenth and last Night —It was quite dark at 10 15 when we started, and we had one and three-quarter hours in which to cross. Shortly after midnight the moon would rise "I can hardly believe we are really going to get across," said Buckley. "I know I am, and so are you," I answered. We left our sticks behind, because they would interfere with our crawling, and rolled our Burberrys tightly on our backs with string

A quarter of an hour's walk brought us to the railway and the road, which we crossed with the greatest care. For a short distance in the water-meadow we walked bent double, then we went on our hands and knees, and for the rest of the way we crawled. There was thick long grass in the meadow, and it was quite hard work pushing our way through it on our hands and knees. The night was an absolutely still one, and as we passed through the grass it seemed to us that we made a swishing noise that must be heard for hundreds of yards.

There were some very accommodating dry ditches, which for the most part ran in the right direction. By crawling down these we were able to keep our heads below the level of the grass nearly the whole time, only glancing up from time to time to get our direction by the poplars. After what seemed an endless time, but was actually about three-quarters of an hour, we reached a road which we believed was patrolled, as it was here that I had seen the flash of a bayonet in the daytime.

After looking round cautiously we crossed this, and crawled on—endlessly, it seemed.

Buckley relieved me, and took the lead for a bit. Then we changed places again, and the next time I looked up the poplars really did seem a bit nearer.

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Then Buckley whispered to me, "Hurry up, the moon's rising." I looked back towards the east, and saw the edge of the moon peering over the hills. We were still about 100 yards from the stream. We will get across now, even if we have to fight for it, I thought, and crawled on at top speed. Suddenly I felt a hand on my heel, and stopped and looked back. Buckley pointed ahead, and there, about 15 yards off, was a sentry walking along a footpath on the bank of the stream. He appeared to have no rifle, and had probably just been relieved from his post. He passed without seeing us. One last spurt and we were in the stream (it was only a few feet broad) and up the other bank. "Crawl," said Buckley. "Run," said I, and we ran. After 100 yards we stopped, exhausted. "I believe we've done it, old man," I said. "Come on," said Buckley, "we're not there yet." For ten minutes we walked at top speed in a semi-circle, and at length hit a road which I knew must lead to Barzheim. On it, there was a big board on a post. On examination this proved to be a boundary post, and we stepped into Switzerland, feeling a happiness and a triumph such, I firmly believe, as few men in this war have felt, though they may have deserved the feeling many times more.

We crossed into Switzerland at about 12.30 A.M. on the morning of 9th June 1917. A J EVANS

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HE brooded long over the matter, and at length—but not until after his meal—he hit on a plan, promising, though distasteful. He called Bale, and made inquiries through that taciturn man; and next morning he sat late at his breakfast. He had learned that the garrison used the inn much, many of the officers

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calling there for their "morning"; and the information proved correct. About ten he heard heavy steps in the stone-paved passage, spurs rang out an arrogant challenge, voices called for Patsy and Molly, and demanded this or that. By-and-by two officers, almost lads, sauntered into the room in which he sat, and, finding him there, moved with a wink and a grin to the window. They leant out, and he heard them laugh, he knew that they were discussing him before they turned to the daily fare—the neat ankles of a passing "colleen," the glancing eyes of the French milliner over the way, or the dog-fight at the corner. The two remained thus, half eclipsed as far as the Colonel was concerned, until presently the sallow-faced man sauntered idly into the room.

He did not see the Colonel at once, but the latter rose and bowed, and Marsh, a little added colour in his face, returned the salute—with an indifferent grace. It was clear that, though he had behaved better than his fellows on the previous day, he had no desire to push the acquaintance further.

Colonel John, however, gave him no chance. Still standing, and with a grave, courteous face, "May I, as a stranger," he said, "trouble you with a question, sir?"

The two lady-killers at the window heard the words and nudged one another, with a stifled chuckle at their comrade's predicament. Captain Marsh, with one eye on them, assented stiffly.

"Is there any one," the Colonel asked, "in Tralee—I fear the chance is small—who gives fencing lessons?—or who is qualified to do so?"

The Captain's look of surprise yielded to one of pitying comprehension. He smiled—he could not help it; while the young men drew in their heads to hear the better.

"Yes," he answered, "there is."

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“ In the regiment, I presume ? ”

“ He is attached to it temporarily. If you will inquire at the Armoury for Lemoine, the Maître d’Armes, he will oblige you, I have no doubt But——”

“ If you please ? ” the Colonel said politely, seeing that Marsh hesitated

“ If you are not a skilled swordsman, I fear that it is not one lesson, or two, or a dozen, will enable you to meet Captain Payton, if you have such a thing in your mind, sir. He is but little weaker than Lemoine, and Lemoine is a fair match with a small-sword for any man out of London Brady in Dublin, possibly, and perhaps half a dozen in England, are his betters, but——” he stopped abruptly, his ear catching a snigger at the window “ I need not trouble you with that,” he concluded lamely.

“ Still,” the Colonel answered simply, “ a long reach goes for much, I have heard, and I am tall ”

Captain Marsh looked at him in pity, and he might have put his compassion into words, but for the young bloods at the window, who, he knew, would repeat the conversation He contented himself, therefore, with saying rather curtly, “ I believe it goes some way ” And he turned stiffly to go out

But the Colonel had a last question to put to him “ At what hour,” he asked, “ should I be most likely to find this—Lemoine, at leisure ? ”

“ Lemoine ? ”

“ If you please ”

Marsh opened his mouth to answer, but found himself anticipated by one of the youngsters “ Three in the afternoon is the best time,” the lad said bluntly, speaking over his shoulder He popped out his head again, that his face, swollen by his perception of the jest, might not betray it

But the Colonel seemed to see nothing “ I thank you,” he said, bowing courteously

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And re-seating himself, as Marsh went out, he finished his breakfast. The two at the window, after exploding once or twice in an attempt to stifle their laughter, drew in their heads, and, still red in the face, marched solemnly past the Colonel, and out of the room. His seat, now the window was clear, commanded a view of the street, and presently he saw the two young bloods go by in the company of four or five of their like. They were gesticulating, nor was there much doubt, from the laughter with which their tale was received, that they were retailing a joke of signal humour.

That did not surprise the Colonel. But when the door opened a moment later, and Marsh came hastily into the room, and with averted face began to peer about for something, he was surprised.

"Where the devil's that snuff-box?" the sallow-faced man exclaimed. "Left it somewhere!" Then, looking about him to make sure that the door was closed. "See here, sir," he said awkwardly, "it's no business of mine, but for a man who has served as you say you have, you're a d—d simple fellow. Take my advice and don't go to Lemoine's at three, if you go at all."

"No?" the Colonel echoed.

"Can't you see they'll be there to guy you?" Marsh retorted impatiently. He could not help liking the man, and yet the man seemed a fool! The next moment, with a hasty nod, he was gone. He had found the box in his pocket.

Colonel Sullivan smiled, and, after carefully brushing the crumbs from his breeches, rose from the table. "A good man," he muttered. "Pity he has not more courage." The next moment he came to attention, for slowly past the window moved Captain Payton himself, riding Flavia's mare, and talking with one of the young bloods who walked at his stirrup.

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The man and the horse ! The Colonel began to understand that something more than wantonness had inspired Payton's conduct the previous night. Either he had been privy from the first to the plot to waylay the horse, or he had bought it cheaply, knowing how it had been acquired, or—a third alternative—it had been placed in his hands, to the end that his reputation as a fire-eater might protect it. In any event, he had had an interest in nipping inquiry in the bud, and, learning who the Colonel was, had acted on the instant, and with considerable presence of mind.

The Colonel looked thoughtful, and though the day was fine for Ireland—that is, no more than a small rain was falling—he remained within doors until five minutes before three o'clock. Bale had employed the interval in brushing the stains of travel from his master's clothes, and combing his horseman's wig with particular care, so that it was a neat and spruce gentleman who at five minutes before three walked through Tralee, and, attending to the directions he had received, approached a particular door, a little within the barrack gate.

Had he glanced up at the windows he would have seen faces at them; moreover, a suspicious ear might have caught, as he paused on the threshold, a scurrying of feet mingled with stifled laughter. But he did not look up. He did not seem to expect to see more than he found, when he entered—a great bare room with its floor strewn with sawdust and its walls adorned here and there by a gaunt trophy of arms. In the middle of the floor, engaged apparently in weighing one foil against another, was a stout, dark-complexioned man, whose light and nimble step, as he advanced to meet his visitor, gave the lie to his weight.

Certainly there came from a half-opened door at the end of the room a stealthy sound as of rats taking cover. But Colonel John did not look that way. His

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whole attention was bent upon the Maître d'Armes, who bowed low to him. Clicking his heels together, and extending his palms in the French fashion, "Good morning, sare," he said, his southern accent unmistakable. "I make you welcome"

The Colonel returned his salute less elaborately. "The Maître d'Armes Lemoine?" he said

"Yes, sare, that is me At your service!"

"I am a stranger in Tralee, and I have been recommended to apply to you. You are, I am told, accustomed to give lessons"

"With the small-sword?" the Frenchman answered, with the same gesture of the open hands "It is my profession"

"I am desirous of brushing up my knowledge—such as it is"

"A vare good notion," the fencing-master replied, his black beady eyes twinkling "Vare good for me. Vare good also for you Always ready, is the gentleman's motto, and to make himself ready, his high recreation But, doubtless, sare," with a faint smile, "you are proficient, and I teach you nothing. You come but to sweat a little" An observant person would have noticed that as he said this he raised his voice above his usual tone

"At one time," Colonel John replied with simplicity, "I was fairly proficient. Then—this happened!" He held out his right hand. "You see?"

"Ah!" the Frenchman said in a low tone, and he raised his hands "That is ogly! That is vare ogly! Can you hold with that?" he added, inspecting the hand with interest He was a different man.

"So, so," the Colonel answered cheerfully.

"Not strongly, eh? It is not possible."

"Not very strongly," the Colonel assented. His hand, like Bale's, lacked two fingers

Lemoine muttered something under his breath, and

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looked at the Colonel with a wrinkled brow. "Tut-tut!" he said, "and how long are you like that, sare?"

"Seven years"

"Pity! pity!" Lemoine exclaimed. Again he looked at his visitor with perplexed eyes. After which, "Dam!" he said suddenly

The Colonel stared.

"It is not right!" the Frenchman continued, frowning. "I—no! Pardon me, sare, I do not fence with *les estropiés*. That is downright! That is certain, sare. I do not do it"

If the Colonel had been listening he might have caught the sound of a warning cough, with a stir, and a subdued murmur of voices—all proceeding from the direction of the inner room. But he had his back to the half-opened door and he seemed to be taken up with the fencing-master's change of tone. "But if," he objected, "I am willing to pay for an hour's practice?"

"Another day, sare. Another day, if you will"

"But I shall not be here another day. I have but to-day. By-and-by," he continued with a smile as kindly as it was humorous, "I shall begin to think that you are afraid to pit yourself against a *manchot*!"

"Oh, la! la!" The Frenchman dismissed the idea with a contemptuous gesture

"Do me the favour, then," Colonel John retorted "If you please?"

Against one of the walls were three chairs arranged in a row. Before each stood a boot-jack, and beside it a pair of boot-hooks; over it, fixed in the wall, were two or three pegs for the occupant's wig, cravat, and cane. The Colonel, without waiting for a further answer, took his seat on one of the chairs, removed his boots, and then his coat, vest, and wig, which he hung on the pegs above him.

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“ And now,” he said gaily, as he stood up, “ the mask ! ”

He did not see the change—for he seemed to have no suspicion—but as he rose, the door of the room behind him became fringed with grinning faces. Payton, the two youths who had leant from the window of the inn and who had carried his words, a couple of older officers, half a dozen subalterns, all were there—and one or two civilians. The more grave could hardly keep the more hilarious in order. The curtain was ready to go up on what they promised themselves would be the most absurd scene. The stranger who fought no duels, yet thought that a lesson or two would make him a match for a dead-hand like Payton—was ever such a promising joke conceived ? The good feeling, even the respect which the Colonel had succeeded in awakening for a short time the evening before, were forgotten in the prospect of such a jest.

The Frenchman made no further demur. He had said what he could, and it was not his business to quarrel with his best clients. He took his mask, and proffered a choice of foils to his antagonist, whose figure, freed from the heavy coat and vest of the day, and the overshadowing wig, seemed younger and more supple than the Frenchman had expected. “ A pity, a pity ! ” the latter said to himself. “ To have lost, if he ever was professor, the joy of life ! ”

“ Are you ready ? ” Colonel John asked.

“ At your service, sare,” the *Maitre d’Armes* replied—but not with much heartiness. The two advanced each a foot, they touched swords, then saluted with that graceful and courteous engagement which to an ignorant observer is one of the charms of the foil. As they did so, and steel grated on steel, the eavesdroppers in the inner room ventured softly from ambush—like rats issuing forth ; soon they were all standing behind

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the Colonel, the sawdust, and the fencers' stamping feet as they lunged or gave back, covering the sound of their movements

They were on the broad grin when they came out. But it took them less than a minute to discover that the entertainment was not likely to be so extravagantly funny as they had hoped. The Colonel was not, strictly speaking, a tyro, moreover, he had, as he said, a long reach. He was no match indeed for Lemoine, who touched him twice in the first bout and might have touched him thrice had he put forth his strength. But he did nothing absurd. When he dropped his point, therefore, at the end of the rally, and, turning to take breath, came face to face with the gallery of onlookers, the best-natured of these felt rather foolish. But Colonel John seemed to find nothing surprising in their presence. He saluted them courteously with his weapon. "I am afraid I cannot show you much sport, gentlemen," he said.

One or two muttered something—a good day, or the like. The rest grinned unmeaningly. Payton said nothing, but, folding his arms with a superior air, leant, frowning haughtily, against the wall.

"*Parbleu*," said Lemoine, as they rested. "It is a pity. The wrist is excellent, *sarc*. But the pointing finger is not—is not!"

"I do my best," the Colonel answered, with cheerful resignation. "Shall we engage again?"

"At your pleasure."

The Frenchman's eye no longer twinkled; his gallantry was on its mettle. He was grave and severe, fixing his gaze on the Colonel's attack, and remaining blind to the nods and shrugs and smiles of amusement of his patrons in the background. Again he touched the Colonel, and, alas! again, with an ease which, good-natured as he was, he could not mask.

Colonel John, a little breathed, and perhaps a

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little chagrined also, dropped his point. Some one coughed, and another tittered.

"I think he will need another lesson or two," Payton remarked, speaking ostensibly to one of his companions, but loudly enough for all to hear.

The man whom he addressed made an inaudible answer. The Colonel turned towards them.

"And—a new hand," Payton added in the same tone.

Even for his henchman the remark was almost too much. But the Colonel, strange to say—perhaps he really was very simple—seemed to find nothing offensive in it. On the contrary, he replied to it.

"That was precisely," he said, "what I thought when this"—he indicated his maimed hand—"happened to me. And I did my best to procure one."

"Did you succeed?" Payton retorted in an insolent tone.

"To some extent," the Colonel replied, in the most matter-of-fact manner. And he transferred the foil to his left hand.

"Give you four to one," Payton rejoined, "Lemoine hits you twice before you hit him once."

Colonel John had anticipated some of the things that had happened. But he had not foreseen this. He was quick to see the use to which he might put it, and it was only for an instant that he hesitated. Then "Four to one?" he repeated.

"Five, if you like!" Payton sneered.

"If you will wager," the Colonel said slowly, "if you will wager the grey mare you were riding this morning, sir——"

Payton uttered an angry oath. "What do you mean?" he said.

"Against ten guineas," Colonel John continued carelessly, bending the foil against the floor and letting it spring to its length again, "I will make that wager."

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Payton scowled at him. He was aware of the other's interest in the mare, and suspected, at least, that he had come to town to recover her. And caution would have had him refuse the snare. But his toadies were about him, he had long ruled the roast, to retreat went against the grain, while to suppose that the man had the least chance against Lemoine was absurd. Yet he hesitated. "What do you know about the mare?" he said coarsely.

"I have seen her. But of course, if you are afraid to wager her, sir——"

Payton answered to the spur. "Bah! Afraid?" he cried contemptuously. "Done, with you!"

"That is settled," the Colonel replied. "I am at your service," he continued, turning to the Maître d'Armes. "I trust," indicating that he was going to fence with his left hand, "that this will not embarrass you?"

"No! But it is interesting, by G—d, it is vare interesting," the Frenchman replied. "I have encountered *les gauchers* before, and——"

He did not finish the sentence, but saluting, he assumed an attitude a little more wary than usual. He bent his knees a trifle lower, and held his left shoulder somewhat more advanced, as compared with his right. The foils felt one another, and "Oh, va, va!" he muttered. "I understand, the droll!"

For half a minute or so the faces of the onlookers reflected only a mild surprise, mingled with curiosity. But the fencers had done little more than feel one another's blades, they had certainly not exchanged more than half a dozen serious passes, before this was changed, before one face grew longer and another more intent. A man who was no fencer, and therefore no judge, spoke. A fierce oath silenced him. Another murmured an exclamation under his breath. A third stooped low with his hands on his hips that

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he might not lose a lunge or a parry For Payton, his face became slowly a dull red At length, "Ha ! " cried one, drawing in his breath. And he was right. The Maître d'Armes' button, sliding under the Colonel's blade, had touched his opponent. At once, Lemoine sprang back out of danger, the two points dropped, the two fencers stood back to take breath

For a few seconds the Colonel's chagrin was plain He looked, and was, disappointed Then he conquered the feeling, and he smiled "I fear you are too strong for me," he said

"Not at all," the Frenchman made answer "Not at all ! It was fortune, sare I know not what you were with your right hand, but you are with the left vare strong, of the first force. It is certain "

Payton, an expert, had been among the earliest to discern, with as much astonishment as mortification, the Colonel's skill With a sudden sinking of the heart he had foreseen the figure he would cut if Lemoine were worsted ; he had endured a moment of great fear But at this success he choked down his apprehensions, and, a sanguine man, he breathed again. One more hit, one more success on Lemoine's part, and he had won the wager ! But with all he could do he could no longer bear himself carelessly Pallid and troubled, he watched, biting his lip , and though he longed to say something cutting, he could think of nothing Nay, if it came to that, he could not trust his voice, and while he still faltered, seeking for a gibe and finding none, the two combatants had crossed their foils again Their tense features, plain through the masks, as well as their wary movements, made it clear that they played for a victory of which neither was confident

By this time the rank and file of the spectators had been reinforced by the arrival of Marsh ; who, discovering a scene so unexpected, and quickly perceiv-

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ing that Lemoine was doing his utmost, wondered what Payton's thoughts were. Apart from the wager, it was clear that if Lemoine had not met his match, the Captain had, and in the future would have to mend his manners in respect to one person present. Doubtless many of those in the room, on whose toes Payton had often trodden, had the same idea, and felt secret joy, pleased that the bully of the regiment was like to meet with a reverse and a master.

Whatever their thoughts, a quick rally diverted them, and riveted all eyes on the fencers. For a moment thrust and parry followed one another so rapidly that the untrained gaze could not distinguish them or trace the play. The spectators held their breath, expecting a hit with each second. But the rally died away again, neither of the players had got through the other's guard, and now they fell to it more slowly, the Colonel, a little winded, giving ground, and Lemoine pressing him.

Then, no one saw precisely how it happened, whiff-whaff, Lemoine's weapon flew from his hand and struck the wall with a whirr and a jangle. The fencing-master wrung his wrist. "*Sacre !*" he cried, between his teeth, unable in the moment of surprise to control his chagrin.

The Colonel touched him with his button, for form's sake, then stepped rapidly to the wall, picked up the foil by the blade, and courteously returned it to him. Two or three cried "Bravo," but faintly, as barely comprehending what had happened. The greater part stood silent in sheer astonishment. For Payton, he remained dumb with mortification and disgust, and if he had the grace to be thankful for anything, he was thankful that for the moment attention was diverted from him.

Lemoine, indeed, the person more immediately concerned, had only eyes for his opponent, whom he

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regarded with a queer mixture of approval and vexation "You have been at Angelo's school in Paris, sare?" he said, in the tone of one who stated a fact rather than asked a question

"It is true," the Colonel answered, smiling. "You have guessed it"

"And learned that trick from him?"

"I did. It is of little use except to a left-handed man"

"Yet in play with one not of the first force it succeeds twice out of three times," Lemoine answered "Twice out of three times, with the right hand *Ma foi*! I remember it well! I offered the master twenty guineas, monsieur, if he would teach it me. But because"—he held out his palms pathetically—"I was right-handed, he would not"

"I am fortunate," Colonel John answered, bowing, and regarding his opponent with kind eyes, "in being able to requite your good nature. I shall be pleased to teach it you for nothing, but not now. Gentlemen," he continued, giving up his foil to Lemoine, and removing his mask, "gentlemen, you will bear me witness, I trust, that I have won the wager?"

Some nodded, some murmured an affirmative, others turned towards Payton, who, too deeply chagrined to speak, nodded sullenly. How willingly at that moment would he have laid the Colonel dead at his feet, and Lemoine, and the whole crew, friends and enemies! He gulped something down. "Oh, d—n you!" he said, "I give it you! Take the mare, she's in the stable!"

STANLEY J WEYMAN

SCENES FROM THE NOVELISTS

THE DEFENCE OF THE COTTAGE

SEVERAL knocks, as from the knuckles of an iron glove, were given to the door of the cottage, and a voice was heard entreating shelter from the storm for a traveller who had lost his way. Robin arose and went to the door.

"What are you?" said Robin.

"A soldier," replied the voice. "an unfortunate adherent of Longchamp, flying the vengeance of Prince John."

"Are you alone?" said Robin.

"Yes," said the voice. "it is a dreadful night. Hospitable cottagers, pray give me admittance. I would not have asked it but for the storm. I would have kept my watch in the woods."

"That I believe," said Robin. "You did not reckon on the storm when you turned into this pass. Do you know there are rogues this way?"

"I do," said the voice.

"So do I," said Robin.

A pause ensued, during which Robin listening attentively caught a faint sound of whispering.

"You are not alone," said Robin. "Who are your companions?"

"None but the wind and the water," said the voice, "and I would I had them not."

"The wind and the water have many voices," said Robin, "but I never before heard them say, 'What shall we do?'"

Another pause ensued after which,

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"Look ye, master cottager," said the voice, in an altered tone, "if you do not let us in willingly, we will break down the door"

"Ho ! ho !" roared the baron, "you are become plural are you, rascals ? How many are there of you, thieves ? What, I warrant, you thought to rob and murder a poor harmless cottager and his wife, and did not dream of a garrison ? You looked for no weapon of opposition but spit, poker, and basting ladle, wielded by unskilful hands : but, rascals, here is short sword and long cudgel in hands well tried in war, wherewith you shall be drilled into cullenders and beaten into mummy "

No reply was made, but furious strokes from without resounded upon the door. Robin, Marian, and the baron threw by their pilgrim's attire, and stood in arms on the defensive. They were provided with swords, and the cottager gave them bucklers and helmets, for all Robin's haunts were furnished with secret armouries. But they kept their swords sheathed, and the baron wielded a ponderous spear, which he pointed towards the door ready to run through the first that should enter, and Robin and Marian each held a bow with the arrow drawn to its head and pointed in the same direction. The cottager flourished a strong cudgel (a weapon in the use of which he prided himself on being particularly expert), and the wife seized the spit from the fireplace, and held it as she saw the baron hold his spear. The storm of wind and rain continued to beat on the roof and the casement, and the storm of blows to resound upon the door, which at length gave way with a violent crash, and a cluster of armed men appeared without, seemingly not less than twelve. Behind them rolled the stream, now changed from a gentle and shallow river to a mighty and impetuous torrent, roaring in waves of yellow foam, partially reddened by the

THE DEFENCE OF THE COTTAGE

light that streamed through the open door, and turning up its convulsed surface in flashes of shifting radiance from restless masses of half-visible shadow. The stepping-stones, by which the intruders must have crossed, were buried under the waters. On the opposite bank the light fell on the stems and boughs of the rock-rooted oak and ash tossing and swaying in the blast, and sweeping the flashing spray with their leaves

The instant the door broke, Robin and Marian loosed their arrows Robin's struck one of the assailants in the juncture of the shoulder, and disabled his right arm Marian's struck a second in the juncture of the knee, and rendered him unserviceable for the night The baron's long spear struck on the mailed breastplate of a third, and being stretched to its full length by the long-armed hero, drove him to the edge of the torrent, and plunged him into its eddies, along which he was whirled down the darkness of the descending stream, calling vainly on his comrades for aid, till his voice was lost in the mingled roar of the waters and the wind. A fourth springing through the door was laid prostrate by the cottager's cudgel. but the wife, being less dexterous than her company, though an Amazon in strength, missed her pass at a fifth, and drove the point of the spit several inches into the right-hand door-post as she stood close to the left, and thus made a new barrier which the invaders could not pass without dipping under it and submitting their necks to the sword. but one of the assailants seizing it with gigantic rage, shook it at once from the grasp of its holder and from its lodgment in the post, and at the same time made good the irruption of the rest of his party into the cottage.

Now raged an unequal combat, for the assailants fell two to one on Robin, Marian, the baron, and the cottager ; while the wife, being deprived of her spit,

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converted everything that was at hand to a missile, and rained pots, pans, and pipkins on the armed heads of the enemy. The baron raged like a tiger, and the cottager laid about him like a thresher. One of the soldiers struck Robin's sword from his hand and brought him on his knee, when the boy, who had been roused by the tumult and had been peeping through the inner door, leaped forward in his shirt, picked up the sword, and replaced it in Robin's hand, who instantly springing up, disarmed and wounded one of his antagonists, while the other was laid prostrate under the dint of a brass cauldron launched by the Amazonian dame. Robin now turned to the aid of Marian, who was parrying most dexterously the cuts and slashes of her two assailants, of whom Robin delivered her from one, while a well-applied blow of her sword struck off the helmet of the other, who fell on his knees to beg a boon, and she recognised Sir Ralph Montfaucon. The men who were engaged with the baron and the peasant, seeing their leader subdued, immediately laid down their arms and cried for quarter. The wife brought some strong rope, and the baron tied their arms behind them.

T L PEACOCK

AT BAY IN THE INN

DENYS strung his bow, and walked rapidly into the kitchen. There were seven hideous faces seated round the fire, and the landlord pouring them out neat brandy, blood's forerunner in every age.

"What! company!" cried Denys gaily, "one minute, my lads, and I'll be with you", and he snatched up a lighted candle off the table, opened the door that led to the staircase, and went up it halloing,

AT BAY IN THE INN

“What, Gerard! whither hast thou skulked to?”
There was no answer.

He hallooed louder, “Gerard, where art thou?”

After a moment, in which Denys lived an hour of agony, a peevish half-inarticulate noise issued from the room at the head of the little stairs. Denys burst in, and there was Gerard asleep.

“Thank God!” he said in a choking voice, then began to sing loud, untuneful ditties. Gerard put his fingers into his ears, but presently he saw in Denys’s face a horror that contrasted strangely with this sudden merriment

“What ails thee?” said he, sitting up and staring

“Hush!” said Denys, and his hand spoke even more plainly than his lips “Listen to me”

Denys then pointing significantly to the door, to show Gerard sharp ears were listening hard by, continued his song aloud, but under cover of it threw in short muttered syllables

“ (Our lives are in peril)

“ (Thieves)

“ (Thy doublet.)

“ (Thy sword)

“ Aid

“ Coming

“ Put off time ” Then aloud—

“ Well, now, wilt have t’other bottle?—Say Nay ”

“ No, not I ”

“ But I tell thee, there are half a dozen jolly fellows—Tired ”

“ Ay, but I am too wearied,” said Gerard. “ Go thou ”

“ Nay, nay!” Then he went to the door and called out cheerfully, “ Landlord, the young milksop will not rise. Give those honest fellows t’other bottle. I will pay for’t in the morning.”

He heard a brutal and fierce chuckle.

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Having thus by observation made sure the kitchen door was shut, and the miscreants were not actually listening, he examined the chamber door closely, then quietly shut it, but did not bolt it, and went and inspected the window

It was too small to get out of, and yet a thick bar of iron had been let in the stone to make it smaller, and just as he made this chilling discovery, the outer door of the house was bolted with a loud clang

"I would fear them less, Gerard, but for one they call the Abbot I picked him out at once Taller than you, bigger than both of us put together Fights with an axe Gerard, a man to lead a herd of deer to battle. I shall kill that man to-night, or he will kill me I think somehow 'tis he will kill me "

"Saints forbid ! Shoot him at the door ! What avails his strength against your weapon ? "

"I shall pick him out, but if it comes to hand fighting, run swiftly under his guard, or you are a dead man I tell thee neither of us may stand a blow of that axe, thou never sawest such a body of a man."

Gerard was for bolting the door, but Denys with a sign showed him that half the door-post turned outward on a hinge, and the great bolt was little more than a blind. "I have forborne to bolt it," said he, "that they may think us the less suspicious"

Near an hour rolled away thus. It seemed an age Yet it was but a little hour, and the town was a league distant And some of the voices in the kitchen became angry and impatient.

"They will not wait much longer," said Denys, "and we have no chance at all unless we surprise them "

"I will do whate'er you bid," said Gerard meekly.

There was a cupboard on the same side as the door, but between it and the window It reached nearly

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to the ground, but not quite. Denys opened the cupboard door and placed Gerard on a chair behind it. "If they run for the bed, strike at the napes of their necks! a sword cut there always kills or disables" He then arranged the bolsters and their shoes in the bed so as to deceive a person peeping from a distance, and drew the short curtains at the head

They took their posts.

Denys blew out the candle.

"We must keep silence now"

But in the terrible tension of their nerves and very souls they found they could hear a whisper fainter than any man could catch at all outside that door They could hear each other's hearts thump at times

"Good news!" breathed Denys, listening at the door "They are casting lots"

There was a scuffling of feet heard in the kitchen, then all was still

Denys took up his position behind the door.

But he or they who had drawn the lot seemed determined to run no foolish risks Nothing was attempted in a hurry.

When they were almost starved with cold, and waiting for the attack, the door on the stairs opened softly and closed again Nothing more

There was another harrowing silence

Then a single light footstep on the stair; and nothing more

Then a light crept under the door; and nothing more.

Presently there was a gentle scratching, not half so loud as a mouse's, and the false door-post opened by degrees, and left a perpendicular space, through

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which the light streamed in. The door, had it been bolted, would now have hung by the bare tip of the bolt, which went into the real door-post, but as it was, it swung gently open of itself. It opened inwards, so Denys did not raise his crossbow from the ground, but merely grasped his dagger.

The candle was held up, and shaded from behind by a man's hand.

He was inspecting the beds from the threshold, satisfied that his victims were both in bed.

The man glided into the apartment. But at the first step something in the position of the cupboard and chair made him uneasy. He ventured no further, but put the candle on the floor and stooped to peer under the chair, but as he stooped an iron hand grasped his shoulder, a dagger was driven fiercely through his neck, and the assassin was laid noiselessly on the floor.

Denys closed the door, bolted it gently, drew the post to, and even while he was doing it whispered Gerard to bring a chair. It was done.

"Help me set him up."

"Dead?"

"Parbleu."

"What for?"

"Frighten them! Gain time."

Even while saying this, Denys had whipped a piece of string round the dead man's neck, and tied him to the chair, and there the ghastly figure sat fronting the door.

"Denys, I can do better. Saints forgive me!"

"What? Be quick then, we have not many moments."

And Denys got his crossbow ready, and tearing off his straw mattress, reared it before him and prepared to shoot the moment the door should open,

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for he had no hope any more would come singly when they found the first did not return

While thus employed, Gerard was busy about the seated corpse, and to his amazement Denys saw a luminous glow spreading rapidly over the white face

Gerard blew out the candle, and on this the corpse's face shone still more like a glow-worm's head.

Denys shook in his shoes, and his teeth chattered

"What, in Heaven's name, is this?" he whispered.

"Hush! 'tis but phosphorus, but 'twill serve."

"Away! they will surprise thee"

In fact uneasy mutterings were heard below, and at last a deep voice said, "What makes him so long? is the drôle rifling them?"

It was their comrade they suspected then, not the enemy. Soon a step came softly but rapidly up the stairs, the door was gently tried.

When this resisted, which was clearly not expected, the sham post was very cautiously moved, and an eye no doubt peeped through the aperture; for there was a howl of dismay, and the man was heard to stumble back and burst into the kitchen, where a babel of voices rose directly on his return

Gerard ran to the dead thief and began to work on him again

"Back, madman!" whispered Denys

"Nay, nay I know these ignorant brutes, they will not venture here awhile I can make him ten times more fearful"

"At least close that opening! Let them not see you at your devilish work"

Gerard closed the sham post, and in half a minute his brush made the dead head a sight to strike any man with dismay. He put his art to a strange use, and one unparalleled perhaps in the history of mankind. He illuminated his dead enemy's face to frighten his living foe, the staring eyeballs he made

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globes of fire ; the teeth he left white, for so they were more terrible by the contrast , but the palate and tongue he tipped with fire, and on the brow he wrote in burning letters, "**En Mort.**"

The steps that led down to the kitchen were fifteen, but they were nearly perpendicular there was therefore in point of fact no distance between the besiegers and besieged, and the latter now caught almost every word

"Come, no quarrelling when work is afoot," roared a tremendous diapason, "or I'll brain ye both with my fist "

"The Abbot," whispered Denys gravely.

He felt the voice he had just heard could belong to no man but the colossus he had seen in passing through the kitchen It made the place vibrate The quarrelling continued some time, and then there was a dead silence

"Look out, Gerard "

"Ay, what will they do next ? "

"We shall soon know "

"Shall I wait for you, or cut down the first that opens the door ? "

"Wait for me, lest we strike the same and waste a blow Alas ! we cannot afford that."

Dead silence

Sudden came into the room a thing that made them start and their hearts quiver

And what was it ? A moonbeam

The moon drew a broad stripe of light across the door Presently Denys whispered, "Gerard ! "

Gerard looked and raised his sword.

Acutely as they had listened, they had heard of late no sound on the stair Yet there—on the door-post,

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at the edge of the stream of moonlight, were the tips
of the fingers of a hand

The nails glistened

Presently they began to crawl and crawl down towards the bolt, but with infinite slowness and caution. In so doing they crept into the moonlight. The actual motion was imperceptible, but slowly, slowly the fingers came out whiter and whiter, but the hand between the main knuckles and the wrist remained dark. Denys slowly raised his crossbow.

He levelled it. He took a long steady aim.

Gerard palpitated. At last the crossbow twanged. The hand was instantly nailed, with a stern jar, to the quivering door-post. Gerard's uplifted sword descended and severed the wrist with two swift blows.

"Two," said Denys.

He strung his crossbow, and kneeled behind his cover again.

"The next will be the Abbot."

The wounded man moved, and presently crawled down to his companions on the stairs, and the kitchen door was shut.

There nothing was heard now but low muttering. The last incident had revealed the mortal character of the weapons used by the besieged.

"I begin to think the Abbot's stomach is not so great as his body," said Denys.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when the following events happened all in a couple of seconds. The kitchen door was opened roughly, a heavy but active man darted up the stairs without any manner of disguise, and a single ponderous blow sent the door not only off its hinges, but right across the room on to Denys's fortification, which it struck so rudely as nearly to lay him flat. And in the doorway stood a colossus with a glittering axe.

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He saw the dead man with the moon's blue light on half his face, and the red light on the other half he stared, his arms fell, his knees knocked together, and he crouched with terror

"LA MORT !" he cried, in tones of terror, and turned and fled. In which act Denys started up and shot him through both jaws. He sprang with one bound into the kitchen, and there leaned on his axe

Denys strung his bow and put his hand into his breast

He drew it out dismayed

"My last bolt is gone," he groaned

"But we have our swords, and you have slain the giant "

"No, Gerard," said Denys gravely, "I have not. And the worst is, I have wounded him. Fool ! to shoot at a retreating lion. He had never faced thy handiwork again, but for my meddling "

"Ha ! to your guard ! I hear them open the door "

Then Denys, depressed by the one error he had committed in all this fearful night, felt convinced his last hour had come. He drew his sword, but like one doomed. But what is this ? a red light flickers on the ceiling. Gerard flew to the window and looked out. There were men with torches, and breastplates gleaming red. "We are saved ! Armed men ! " And he dashed his sword through the window shouting, "Quick ! Quick ! we are sore pressed "

"Back ! " yelled Denys ; " they come strike none but him ! "

That very moment the Abbot and two men with naked weapons rushed into the room. Even as they came, the outer door was hammered fiercely, and the Abbot's comrades, hearing it, and seeing the torchlight, turned and fled. Not so the terrible Abbot. wild with rage and pain, he spurned his dead comrade, chair and all, across the room, then as the men faced

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him on each side, he waved his tremendous axe like a feather right and left, and cleared a space, then lifted it to hew them both in pieces

His antagonists were inferior in strength, but not in swiftness and daring, and above all they had settled how to attack him. The moment he reared his axe, they flew at him like cats, and both together. If he struck a full blow with his weapon he would most likely kill one, but the other would certainly kill him. he saw this, and intelligent as well as powerful, he thrust the handle fiercely in Denys's face, and turning, jobbed with the steel at Gerard. Denys went staggering back. Gerard had rushed in like lightning, and just as the axe turned to descend on him, drove his sword through the giant's body.

The stricken giant bellowed like a bull, dropped his axe, and clutching Gerard's throat tremendously, shook him like a child. Then Denys with a fierce snarl drove his sword into the giant's back.

Just then the street door was forced.

Suddenly the Abbot's arms whirled like windmills, and his huge body wrenched wildly and carried them to the doorway (twisting their wrists and nearly throwing them off their legs). He fell with a tremendous crash against the door below, carrying it away with him like a sheet of paper, and through the aperture the glare of torches burst on the awe-struck faces above, half blinding them.

The thieves at the first alarm had made for the back door, but driven thence by a strong guard ran back to the kitchen, just in time to see the lock forced out of the socket, and half-a-dozen mailed archers burst in upon them. On these in pure despair they drew their swords.

But ere a blow was struck on either side, the staircase door behind them was battered into their midst

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with one ponderous blow, and with it the Abbot's body came flying, hurled as they thought by no mortal hand, and rolled on the floor, and quivered, but breathed no more

The thieves, smitten with dismay, fell on their knees directly, while, above, the rescued ones still stood like statues rooted to the spot, their swords extended in the red torchlight, expecting their indomitable enemy to leap back on them as wonderfully as he had gone.

CHARLES READE

ROBBED

SILAS was thinking with double complacency of his supper—first, because it would be hot and savoury, and secondly, because it would cost him nothing. For the little bit of pork was a present from that excellent housewife Miss Priscilla Lammeter, to whom he had this day carried home a handsome piece of linen; and it was only on occasion of a present like this that Silas indulged himself with roast-meat. Supper was his favourite meal, because it came at his time of revelry, when his heart warmed over his gold, whenever he had roast-meat, he always chose to have it for supper. But this evening he had no sooner ingeniously knotted his string fast round his bit of pork, twisted the string according to rule over his door-key, passed it through the handle, and made it fast on the hanger, then he remembered that a piece of very fine twine was indispensable to his “setting up” a new piece of work in his loom early in the morning. It had slipped his memory, because in coming from Mr Lammeter's he had not had to pass through the village; but to lose time by going on errands in the morning was out of the question. It was a nasty fog to turn out into, but there were things Silas loved

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better than his own comfort , so drawing his pork to the extremity of the hanger, and arming himself with his lantern and his old sack, he set out on what in ordinary weather would have been a twenty minutes' errand . He could not have locked his door without undoing his well-knotted string and retarding his supper ; it was not worth his while to make that sacrifice. What thief would find his way to the Stone-pits on such a night as this ? and why should he come on this particular night, when he had never come through all the fifteen years before ? These questions were not distinctly present in Silas's mind , they merely served to represent the vaguely felt foundation of his freedom from anxiety

He reached his door in much satisfaction that his errand was done ; he opened it, and to his short-sighted eyes everything remained as he had left it, except that the fire sent out a welcome increase of heat. He trod about the floor while putting by his lantern and throwing aside his hat and sack, so as to merge the marks of Dunstan's feet on the sand in the marks of his own nailed boots. Then he moved his pork nearer to the fire, and sat down to the agreeable business of tending the meat and warming himself at the same time

Any one who had looked at him as the red light shone upon his pale face, strange straining eyes, and meagre form, would perhaps have understood the mixture of contemptuous pity, dread, and suspicion with which he was regarded by his neighbours in Raveloe . Yet few men could be more harmless than poor Marner . In his truthful, simple soul not even the growing greed and worship of gold could beget any vice directly injurious to others . The light of his faith quite put out, and his affections made desolate, he had clung with all the force of his nature to his work and his money ; and like all objects to which a

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man devotes himself, they had fashioned him into correspondence with themselves. His loom, as he wrought in it without ceasing, had in its turn wrought on him, and confirmed more and more the monotonous craving for its monotonous response. His gold, as he hung over it and saw it grow, gathered his power of loving together into a hard isolation like its own

As soon as he was warm he began to think it would be a long while to wait till after supper before he drew out his guineas, and it would be pleasant to see them on the table before him as he ate his unwonted feast. For joy is the best of wine, and Silas's guineas were a golden wine of that sort

He rose and placed his candle unsuspectingly on the floor near his loom, swept away the sand without noticing any change, and removed the bricks. The sight of the empty hole made his heart leap violently, but the belief that his gold was gone could not come at once—only terror and the eager effort to put an end to the terror. He passed his trembling hand all about the hole, trying to think it possible that his eyes had deceived him ; then he held the candle in the hole and examined it curiously, trembling more and more. At last he shook so violently that he let fall the candle, and lifted his hands to his head, trying to steady himself, that he might think. Had he put his gold somewhere else by a sudden resolution last night, and then forgotten it ? A man falling into dark waters seeks a momentary footing even on sliding stones, and Silas, by acting as if he believed in false hopes, warded off the moment of despair. He searched in every corner, he turned his bed over and shook it and kneaded it, he looked in his brick oven where he laid his sticks. When there was no other place to be searched, he kneeled down again and felt once more all round the hole. There was no untried

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refuge left for a moment's shelter from the terrible truth.

Yes, there was a sort of refuge which always comes with the prostration of thought under an overpowering passion, it was that expectation of impossibilities, that belief in contradictory images, which is still distinct from madness, because it is capable of being dissipated by the external fact. Silas got up from his knees, trembling, and looked round at the table. Didn't the gold lie there after all? The table was bare. Then he turned and looked behind him—looked all round his dwelling—seeming to strain his brown eyes after some possible appearance of the bags where he had already sought them in vain. He could see every object in his cottage—and his gold was not there.

Again he put his trembling hands to his head, and gave a wild ringing scream, the cry of desolation. For a few moments after, he stood motionless, but the cry had relieved him from the first maddening pressure of the truth. He turned and tottered towards his loom, and got into the seat where he worked, instinctively seeking this as the strongest assurance of reality.

And now that all the false hopes had vanished, and the first shock of certainty was past, the idea of a thief began to present itself, and he entertained it eagerly, because a thief might be caught and made to restore the gold. The thought brought some new strength with it, and he started from his loom to the door. As he opened it the rain beat in upon him, for it was falling more and more heavily. There were no foot-steps to be tracked on such a night. Footsteps? When had the thief come? During Silas's absence in the daytime the door had been locked, and there had been no marks of any inroad on his return by daylight. And in the evening too, he said to himself, everything

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was the same as when he had left it. The sand and bricks looked as if they had not been moved. *Was* it a thief who had taken the bags? or was it a cruel power that no hands could reach which had delighted in making him a second time desolate? He shrank from this vaguer dread, and fixed his mind with struggling effort on the robber with hands, who could be reached by hands. His thoughts glanced at all the neighbours who had made any remarks, or asked any questions which he might now regard as a ground of suspicion. There was Jem Rodney, a known poacher, and otherwise disreputable. He had often met Marner in his journeys across the fields, and had said something jestingly about the weaver's money; nay, he had once irritated Marner by lingering at the fire when he called to light his pipe, instead of going about his business. Jem Rodney was the man, there was ease in the thought. Jem could be found and made to restore the money. Marner did not want to punish him, but only to get back his gold which had gone from him, and left his soul like a forlorn traveller on an unknown desert. The robber must be laid hold of. Marner's ideas of legal authority were confused, but he felt that he must go and proclaim his loss; and the great people in the village—the clergyman, the constable, and Squire Cass—would make Jem Rodney, or somebody else, deliver up the stolen money. He rushed out in the rain, under the stimulus of this hope, forgetting to cover his head, not caring to fasten his door; for he felt as if he had nothing left to lose. He ran swiftly, till want of breath compelled him to slacken his pace as he was entering the village at the turning close to the Rainbow.

GEORGE ELIOT

A DESPERATE CHASE

A DESPERATE CHASE

HOWEVER humble I might be, no one knowing anything of our part of the country, would for a moment doubt that now here was a great to-do and talk of John Ridd and his wedding. The fierce fight with the Doones so lately, and my leading of the combat (though I fought not more than need be), and the vanishing of Sir Counsellor, and the galloping madness of Carver had led to the broadest excitement about my wedding of Lorna. We heard that people meant to come from more than thirty miles around, upon excuse of seeing my stature and Lorna's beauty, but in good truth out of sheer curiosity, and the love of meddling.

Lorna's dress was of pure white, clouded with faint lavender (for the sake of the old Earl Brandir), and as simple as need be, except for perfect loveliness. I was afraid to look at her, as I said before, except when each of us said, "I will," and then each dwelled upon the other.

It is impossible for any who have not loved as I have to conceive my joy and pride, when after ring and all was done, and the parson had blessed us, Lorna turned to look at me with her glances of subtle fun subdued by this great act.

Her eyes, which none on earth may ever equal, or compare with, told me such a depth of comfort, yet awaiting further commune, that I was almost amazed, thoroughly as I knew them. Darling eyes, the sweetest eyes, the loveliest, the most loving eyes—the sound of a shot rang through the church, and those eyes were filled with death.

Lorna fell across my knees when I was going to kiss her, as the bridegroom is allowed to do, and encouraged, if he needs it, a flood of blood came out

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upon the yellow wood of the altar steps, and at my feet lay Lorna, trying to tell me some last message out of her faithful eyes I lifted her up, and petted her, and coaxed her, but it was no good ; the only sign of life remaining was a spirt of bright red blood.

Some men know what things befall them in the supreme time of their life—far above the time of death—but to me comes back as a hazy dream, without any knowledge in it, what I did, or felt, or thought, with my wife's arms flagging, flagging, around my neck, as I raised her up, and softly put them there She sighed a long sigh on my breast, for her last farewell to life, and then she grew so cold, and cold, that I asked the time of year

It was now Whit-Tuesday, and the lilacs all in blossom ; and why I thought of the time of year, with the young death in my arms, God, or His angels, may decide, having so strangely given us Enough that so I did, and looked , and our white lilacs were beautiful Then I laid my wife in my mother's arms, and begging that no one would make a noise, went forth for my revenge

Of course, I knew who had done it There was but one man in the world, or at any rate, in our part of it, who could have done such a thing—such a thing I use no harsher word about it, while I leaped upon our best horse, with bridle but no saddle, and set the head of Kickums towards the course now pointed out to me Who showed me the course, I cannot tell I only know that I took it And the men fell back before me

Weapon of no sort had I Unarmed, and wondering at my strange attire (with a bridal vest, wrought by our Annie, and red with the blood of the bride), I went forth just to find out this , whether in this world there be or be not God of justice

With my vicious horse at a furious speed, I came

A DESPERATE CHASE

upon Black Barrow Down, directed by some shout of men, which seemed to me but a whisper. And there, about a furlong before me, rode a man on a great black horse, and I knew that the man was Carver Doone

“Your life or mine,” I said to myself, “as the will of God may be. But we two live not upon this earth, one more hour together.”

I knew the strength of this great man; and I knew that he was armed with a gun—if he had time to load again, after shooting my Lorna—or at any rate with pistols, and a horseman’s sword as well. Nevertheless, I had no more doubt of killing the man before me than a cook has of spitting a headless fowl.

Sometimes seeing no ground beneath me, and sometimes heeding every leaf, and the crossing of the grass-blades, I followed over the long moor, reckless whether seen or not. But only once the other man turned round and looked back again, and then I was beside a rock, with a reedy swamp behind me.

Although he was so far before me, and riding as hard as ride he might, I saw that he had something on the horse in front of him, something which needed care, and stopped him from looking backward. In the whirling of my wits, I fancied first that this was Lorna, until the scene I had been through fell across hot brain and heart, like the drop at the close of a tragedy. Rushing there through crag and quag, at utmost speed of a maddened horse, I saw, as of another’s fate, calmly (as on canvas laid), the brutal deed, the piteous anguish, and the cold despair.

The man turned up the gully leading from the moor to Cloven Rocks, through which John Fry had tracked Uncle Ben, as of old related. But as Carver entered it, he turned round, and beheld me not a hundred yards behind, and I saw that he was bearing his child, little Ensie, before him. Ensie also descried

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me, and stretched his hands and cried to me ; for the face of his father frightened him.

Carver Doone, with a vile oath, thrust spurs into his flagging horse, and laid one hand on a pistol-stock, whence I knew that his slung carbine had received no bullet since the one that had pierced Lorna. And a cry of triumph rose from the black depths of my heart. What cared I for pistols ? I had no spurs, neither was my horse one to need the rowel, I rather held him in than urged him, for he was fresh as ever, and I knew that the black steed in front, if he breasted the steep ascent, where the track divided, must be in our reach at once.

His rider knew this ; and, having no room in the rocky channel to turn and fire, drew rein at the cross-ways sharply, and plunged into the black ravine leading to the Wizard's Slough. " Is it so ? " I said to myself with a brain and head cold as iron ; " though the foul fiend come from the slough, to save thee, thou shalt carve it, Carver "

I followed my enemy carefully, steadily, even leisurely, for I had him, as in a pitfall, whence no escape might be. He thought that I feared to approach him, for he knew not where he was, and his low disdainful laugh came back. " Laugh he who wins," thought I.

A gnarled and half-starved oak, as stubborn as my own resolve, and smitten by some storm of old, hung from the crag above me. Rising from my horse's back, although I had no stirrups, I caught a limb, and tore it (like a mere wheat-awn) from the socket. Men show the rent even now, with wonder, none with more wonder than myself.

Carver Doone turned the corner suddenly on the black and bottomless bog ; with a start of fear he reined back his horse, and I thought he would have turned upon me. But instead of that, he again rode on ; hoping to find a way round the side.

A DESPERATE CHASE

Now there is a way between cliff and slough for those who know the ground thoroughly, or have time enough to search it , but for him there was no road, and he lost some time in seeking it Upon this he made up his mind ; and wheeling, fired, and then rode at me.

His bullet struck me somewhere, but I took no heed of that Fearing only his escape, I laid my horse across the way, and with the limb of the oak struck full on the forehead his charging steed. Ere the slash of the sword came nigh me, man and horse rolled over, and wellnigh bore my own horse down, with the power of their onset

Carver Doone was somewhat stunned, and could not arise for a moment Meanwhile I leaped on the ground and awaited, smoothing my hair back, and baring my arms, as though in the ring for wrestling. Then the little boy ran to me, clasped my leg, and looked up at me, and the terror in his eyes made me almost fear myself.

" Ensie, dear," I said quite gently, grieving that he should see his wicked father killed, " run up yonder round the corner, and try to find a pretty bunch of bluebells for the lady." The child obeyed me, hanging back, and looking back, and then laughing, while I prepared for business. There and then I might have killed mine enemy, with a single blow, while he lay unconscious , but it would have been foul play

With a sullen and black scowl, the Carver gathered his mighty limbs, and arose, and looked round for his weapons , but I had put them well away. Then he came to me and gazed , being wont to frighten thus young men.

" I would not harm you, lad," he said, with a lofty style of sneering . " I have punished you enough, for most of your impertinence For the rest I forgive

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you . because you have been good and gracious to my little son . Go, and be contented."

For answer, I smote him on the cheek, lightly, and not to hurt him . but to make his blood leap up . I would not sully my tongue by speaking to a man like this .

There was a level space of sward between us and the slough . With the courtesy derived from London, and the processions I had seen, to this place I led him . And that he might breathe himself, and have every fibre cool, and every muscle ready, my hold upon his coat I loosed, and left him to begin with me, whenever he thought proper .

I think that he felt that his time was come . I think he knew from my knitted muscles, and the firm arch of my breast, and the way in which I stood , but most of all from my stern blue eyes , that he had found his master . At any rate a paleness came, an ashy paleness on his cheeks, and the vast calves of his legs bowed in, as if he were out of training .

Seeing, this, villain as he was, I offered him first chance . I stretched forth my left hand, as I do to a weaker antagonist, and I let him have the hug of me . But in this I was too generous , having forgotten my pistol-wound, and the cracking of one of my short lower ribs . Carver Doone caught me round the waist, with such a grip as never yet had been laid upon me .

I heard my rib go ; I grasped his arm, and tore the muscle out of it (as the string comes out of an orange); then I took him by the throat, which is not allowed in wrestling , but he had snatched at mine ; and now was no time of dalliance . In vain he tugged, and strained, and writhed, dashed his bleeding fist into my face, and flung himself on me with gnashing jaws . Beneath the iron of my strength—for God that day was with me—I had him helpless in two minutes, and his fiery eyes lolled out .

AENEAS-OF-THE-PISTOL

"I will not harm thee any more," I cried, so far as I could for panting, the work being very furious
"Carver Doone, thou art beaten . own it, and thank God for it ; and go thy way, and repent thyself "

It was all too late. Even if he had yielded in his ravening frenzy—for his beard was like a mad dog's jowl—even if he would have owned that, for the first time in his life, he had found his master ; it was all too late

The black bog had him by the feet , the sucking of the ground drew on him, like the thirsty lips of death. In our fury, we had heeded neither wet nor dry ; nor thought of earth beneath us I myself might scarcely leap, with the last spring of o'erlaboured legs, from the engulfing grave of slime He fell back, with his swarthy breast (from which my gripe had rent all clothing), like a hummock of bog-oak, standing out the quagmire ; and then he tossed his arms to heaven, and they were black to the elbow, and the glare of his eyes was ghastly I could only gaze and pant , for my strength was no more than an infant's, from the fury and the horror Scarcely could I turn away, while, joint by joint, he sank from sight

R D BLACKMORE

AENEAS-OF-THE-PISTOL

THE noble moon that ripens the corn was skulking in black clouds. A wind that seemed to sweep from every quarter, seeking harbours, as the saying goes, was whistling round the peats, and it was grown exceeding cold Ninian led the way across the dung of fifty cattle, skirted through the weeds that bordered some tilled fields, went through a sandy patch encumbered with thick whins in which they got en-

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tangled, making for the clump of firs that they had noticed earlier, where they counted on a sleep within its umbrage. Owls were mourning there, it was the water's edge of Laggan, and the waves were plashing on its fringe. The night seemed given up to all the ancient things. Never a word was passed between them till they reached the planting and got in upon its dust, and there, as they were standing in the dark, the muttering of the wood about them, Ninian smelled crumbled lime. "There's more than fir-trees here!" said he; and pushing farther in, they came with great surprise upon a building. What its nature was they could not solve, four-square it stood among the trees, too big for a domestic dwelling, still in human use, for glass was in its windows, and it had a door, but something in its spirit, cold and bleak, proclaimed it not a place acquaint with fires.

Twice they went about it in the darkness that was here intense, but could make nothing of it, then they found the door of it was only on an outer bar, Aeneas, who came upon it, drew it back and gave them entrance to what seemed one single big apartment, like a barn, but floored with flags and smelling rank of grease. He would have struck a light, but Ninian forbade it, apprehensive that a glint of it might penetrate the wood and bring upon them some intruder. They stumbled round a while, and felt at walls unplastered, woodwork like to folded trestles heaped up in the middle of the floor, some benches, and a crock of tallow. At one end was what seemed to feeling like a massive table with a great flat stone upon it.

Aeneas, groping for some other clue to what the place was meant for, came at last upon a heap of hides, and had no sooner found them than he gave a cry.

"What now?" said Ninian eagerly.

AENEAS-OF-THE-PISTOL

“What do you make of this?” said Aeneas, pulling at the skins “Muskets! Here they are in scores, and smeared with tallow”

“My God, but we are in the kittle country!” said Ninian, with amazement, handling the guns that had been hidden in below the hides—in scores, as Aeneas said “I wouldna miss this night for any money! There’s not supposed to be a gun in Badenoch since the Act was passed disarming Donald, but here they are in heaps like paling-stobs! I knew it! Fine I knew it! ‘Only a weapon here and there among the thatch,’ says Islay, but he doesna know the devils!”

Aeneas was fumbling at the muskets “Not much use in them,” said he, “for half the cocks of them are broken By the locks and length of them I take it they are Dutch”

“Good lad!” said Ninian, with surprise “You have some observation, I will give you credit We’ll get on with one another nobly Dutch they are, man!—ay, but here’s a Spanish fellow, now what in all the world would they be doing here?”

“You told me there was smuggling of arms yourself,” his friend reminded him, “the thing might mean another Rising”

“Tach!” cried Ninian disdainfully. “Wi’ trash like this ye wouldna burn to boil a pot wi’! Na! na! they’re never meant for serious business But what’s the reason of them being stored so snug and greased? . . . Oh, man alive! I see it!” and he laughed until the roof was dirling

But what it was he saw he would not tell, it was, he said, a drollery that would improve by keeping till they reached a barrack “And then,” said he to Aeneas, “you’ll laugh at the confusion that I’ll put them in I wish my father was alive this night to see this ploy with me, and what a lot of clever lads they are in Badenoch!”

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They stretched themselves upon the hides ; Aeneas at least dog-wearied to the bone, and he was sound asleep when Ninian, twenty minutes later, jumped upon his feet on hearing somewhere on the confines of the wood the voice of women. He did not rouse his friend, but went out through the trees, and from the border of them witnessed what disclosed the reason for the dun wife's hurry to be quit of them.

Making through the whins that he and Aeneas had tangled in, were close on thirty men well geared for fighting, in the middle of them four who carried upon spokes what first he took to be a coffin. They passed so close where he was standing in the timber he could see their very buttons, for although the moon was still in hiding, they were lit up in their going through the whins by flambeaux, two or three of which had been brought out to guide them by their wives. If spoil had been their object, none of it was with them, save perhaps the box, which Ninian now perceived was not a coffin but a chest well clamped with brass. A chest like that, thought he, was never built beside Loch Laggan.

When they had passed, he sought the hides again alongside Æneas, still asleep, and slept, himself, until above him clanged, tremendously, a bell !

At first he could not trust his ears, the sound came from the roof, outside, fantastic, like a belling in a dream, and only for a moment. Its echo died away upon the hills surrounding. Opening his eyes, he found white day was at the windows, and Aeneas, dumbfounded, standing with a rope held in his hands.

" *Mo chreach !* " cried Ninian, jumping to his feet, " ye've done it now ! "

" We're in a church ! " said Aeneas, bewildered.

" In faith we are ! I might have kent it by the cheeping of your boots last night, ye sounded dreadful like an elder. And what is more, I ken the kind

AENEAS-OF-THE-PISTOL

of kirk it is—it's one of the sly old chapels of that heather priest, Big John of Badenoch. And now, my grief! that ye have ca'd the bell, we're like to have a congregation "

" How was I to guess a bell was at the end of this accursed rope? I saw it there, and tugged it without thinking What a chapel! " Aeneas looked round it with disgust

" Good enough for keeping guns! Ye'll mind we're in among a lot of heathens, no' right sure yet whether they are Protestant or Papist till the chief of them comes round to tell them wi' a yellow stick It's clear a Mass has not been said in it this Sunday, but now that ye have clinked I hope ye have your sermon ready There's not a wakened body in Drumbeg that's not already putting on his hose for chapel On the cheeping boots of ye!—we'll better jump! "

He turned, so saying, for the open air, slinging on his knapsack as he went, and Aeneas soon after him, and through the wood they scurried to the water-side They had not run for fifty yards along the shore, secure of observation from whatever hamlet folk the luckless ringing of the bell brought out on them, when in a little creek of shingle, very rough, they came upon a boat upturned with oars below her

Loch Laggan here was narrow—little more than half a mile across, if they were on the other side they still were on their way to Corryarrick So far as they could see, no other boat was visible than this which they threw over on her keel Although a coble only, she was heavy as a barge, and took them long to launch, and then they found she had no tholpins

Up the shore and to the wood ran Ninian with his small black knife to cut him pins, and he was gone some minutes out of sight behind a patch of hazel when his voice came to his friend

" Stir ye, Aeneas, or Ninian is done for! "

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Four men, and two of them with guns, had burst out from the firs, and now came down upon the Messenger. The leader was a fellow clad in skins, and had an eye as clear and fiery as a cairngorm stone, his weapon was a *tuagh*, or halberd of Lochaber, and he looked like mischief.

“*Stad ! stad !*” he bellowed “Thou that got my supper, stop and get thy breakfast !”

Ninian, breast-high in the hazel brushwood, with the tholpins cut, his knife still in his hand, backed out and cleared Grey Colin. It was then he gave the cry that summoned Aeneas

They crowded down upon him cautiously as he fell back along a kind of passage to the shore, close up on either hand of him the thicket screened his flanks, and so he had them all before him, hampered in the space so much they could not come at him but singly. He that had the axe was first to close upon him as he crept back, crouching from the houghs, Grey Colin glinting, and the knife along his other wrist. A shape more wicked, wildcat-like and venomous, was never seen at bay in brake or timber, the very teeth of him were bared; he gave a shout—“*Ardcoille !*” ferociously, so loud the wood rang with it; the cry came to him without thinking from Balwhidder graves. he had not used, he had not heard, the slogan of Macgregor since he was a boy.

“Here for you, Gregorach !” said the man in skins, and swung his halberd high above his head.

Ninian, from his crouch, sprang in upon him like a salmon at a fall, and with the black knife stabbed him under the uplifted arm. “*Sin agad !*” said he : “there’s for you !” and with his claymore head he smote him on the forehead. The man fell like an ox and grovelled. “Pick up thy dirt !” said Ninian to the rest, and turned about and ran.

The three were hard upon him when he reached

AENEAS-OF-THE-PISTOL

the cove, and faced them for the second time with Aeneas beside him. "My lad, ye'll not forget this day, whatever o't!" said Ninian, flourishing his sword, and Aeneas had the small Doune pistol of his uncle ready in his hand. As he was standing on the shingle there at Ninian's shoulder, he was put about so much he dared not part his jaws a hair's breadth lest his teeth should chatter.

A speckled man in trews, his white face patched with brown spots like the back of ferns, was first to make at Ninian. He had a sword ground almost to the thinness of a spit, light as a feather, and he walked on *courains*—slippers made of hide with hair outside of them, lashed on his feet with thongs. Of Ninian he had a head's advantage in the height and twenty years of youth.

"Black water on ye!" he cried out, and lunged

Aeneas for the first time cocked his pistol.

"No, no!" said Ninian to him quickly, falling back a bit and parrying, "leave it between us and the swords! Ye better mind the guns." His eyes were piercing on the speckled man's, he said no word, but like a strapper grooming horses hissed between his teeth and briskly plied his sword. He beat upon the other's weapon—ventured once or twice a thrust—broke ground.

At that the other screamed some taunt, mistaken of the movement, and came at him with his weapon back to cut. Grey Colin flashed and got him on the shoulder, he went down upon his knees and fell to crying loudly on the Virgin Mary, but the spit still in his grasp.

Ninian swithered, looking at him for a moment as he cried and with his bonnet dabbed upon his neck to stanch the blood, then turned to find a musket levelled at himself. It never fired. The small Doune pistol gave a crack, the man who held the musket

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fell grotesquely like a string of fish, and Aeneas stood unbelieving that the crooking of a finger held such dreadful chance. He looked about him like a man came from a swoon—at Ninian with his sword advancing on a lad who dashed into the wood, and at the others stricken. A bird cried out, "*Bt glhc' Bt glhc'* Be wise! be wise!" and flew across the creek

"Better a good retreat than a bad stand!" said Ninian, panting, "you in the beak of the boat and me behind, and pull like fury!"

They pushed the boat off, wading to the knees before they had her floating, boarded her and started rowing wildly. A very bedlam of distracted folk broke loose was coming through the wood with hunting cries.

"Can ye make any shape at the swimming?" Ninian asked across his shoulder as they tugged the oars

"A bit," said Aeneas

"Good luck to ye! Ye'll maybe need it. Here's this bitch of a boat, and she's geyzing like a boyne. I doubt she'll not can stay afloat till we reach the other side."

So keen had Aeneas been glowering back in a dreadful fascination at the crumpled figure of the man he shot, he had not noticed that the coble leaked, at Ninian's words he realised the water was above his ankles, and was gushing 'twixt the planks in half a dozen seams

"We'll manage it!" said he, "I think we'll manage it!" but doubted it within his soul. The wind was lifting up the waves white crested, the free-board of the boat already looked appallingly low, she moved but sluggishly

At last a score of men broke through the planting, and ran down into the creek where lay their friends.

MR. POLLY TO THE RESCUE

“ Easy all and jouk ! ” said Ninian quickly “ Grey lead’s flying ! ”

He and Aeneas ducked , some bullets whistled past ; again they started rowing

Twice again the grey lead flew, but wider of them “ Not a gun in Badenoch ! ” quo’ Ninian mockingly “ This, if I were spared, would make a pretty tale for Islay ! ”

The loch was in the boat and almost to their knees before they reached the opening of a burn, screened from the other side by sauch-trees growing on a spit of sand bent round the outlet like a shearing-hook ; Out they jumped before the boat was grounded ; Ninian threw the oars out in the current of the burn and thrust the boat herself out after About them, all Loch Laggan-side was clothed in birch and hazel, wind was humming in the leafage and the boughs were waving , never was a bit of country bonnier, a morning air more sweet and peaceful

NEIL MUNRO

MR. POLLY TO THE RESCUE

Two figures, which had emerged from the upper staircase window of Mr. Rumbold’s and had got, after a perilous paddle in his cistern, on to the fire station, were now slowly but resolutely clambering up the outhouse roof towards the back of the main premises of Messrs Mantell and Throbsons’. They clambered slowly, and one urged and helped the other, slipping and pausing ever and again amidst a constant trickle of fragments of broken tile

One was Mr Polly, with his hair wildly disordered, his face covered with black smudges and streaked with perspiration, and his trouser legs scorched and blackened ; the other was an elderly lady, quietly but

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becomingly dressed in black with small white frills at her neck and wrists, and a Sunday cap of écru lace enlivened with a black velvet bow. Her hair was brushed back from her wrinkled brow and plastered down tightly, meeting in a small knob behind, her wrinkled mouth bore that expression of supreme resolution common with the toothless aged. She was shaky, not with fear, but with the vibrations natural to her years, and she spoke with a slow, quavering firmness.

"I don't mind scrambling," she said with piping inflexibility, "but I can't jump, and I won't jump."

"Scramble, old lady, then, scramble!" said Mr Polly, pulling her arm. "It's one up and two down on these blessed tiles."

"It's not what I'm used to," she said.

"Stick to it," said Mr Polly. "Live and learn," and got to the ridge and grasped her arm to pull her after him.

"I can't jump, mind ye," she repeated, pressing her lips together. "And old ladies like me mustn't be hurried."

"Well, let's get as high as possible, anyhow," said Mr Polly, urging her gently upwards. "Shinning up a waterspout in your line? Near as you'll get to Heaven."

"I *can't* jump," she said. "I can do anything but jump."

"Hold on," said Mr Polly, "while I give you a boost. That's—wonderful."

"So long as it isn't jumping."

The old lady grasped the parapet above, and there was a moment of intense struggle.

"Urup!" said Mr Polly. "Hold on! Gollys! where's she gone to?"

Then an ill-mended, wavering, yet very reassuring spring-side boot appeared for an instant.

MR POLLY TO THE RESCUE

"Thought perhaps there wasn't any roof there!" he explained, scrambling up over the parapet beside her.

"I've never been out on a roof before," said the lady "I'm all disconnected It's very bumpy Especially that last bit Can't we sit here for a bit and rest? I'm not the girl I used to be"

"You sit here ten minutes," shouted Mr Polly, "and you'll pop like a roast chestnut Don't understand me? *Roast Chestnut!* ROAST CHESTNUT! POP! There ought to be a limit to deafness Come on round to the front and see if we can find an attic window Look at this smoke!"

"Nasty!" said the old lady, her eyes following his gesture, puckering her face into an expression of great distaste

"Come on!"

"Can't hear a word you say"

He pulled her arm "Come on!"

She paused for a moment to relieve herself of a series of entirely unexpected chuckles "Sich goings on!" she said. "I never did! Where's he going now?" and came along behind the parapet to the front of the drapery establishment

Below, the street was now fully alive to their presence, and encouraged the appearance of their heads by shouts and cheers A sort of free fight was going on round the fire-escape, order represented by Mr Boomer and the very young policeman, and disorder by some partially intoxicated volunteers with views of their own about the manipulation of the apparatus. Two or three lengths of Mr. Rusper's garden hose appeared to have twined themselves round the ladder Mr Polly watched the struggle with a certain impatience, and glanced ever and again over his shoulder at the increasing volume of smoke and steam that was pouring up from the burning fire station. He decided to break an attic window and get in, and so try and

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get down through the shop He found himself in a little bedroom, and returned to fetch his charge For some time he could not make her understand his purpose.

“Got to come at once !” he shouted

“I hain’t ’ad sich a time for years !” said the old lady

“We’ll have to get down through the house !”

“Can’t do no jumping,” said the old lady “No !”

She yielded reluctantly to his grasp

She stared over the parapet “Runnin’ and scurryin’ about like black beetles in a kitchen,” she said

“We’ve got to hurry”

“Mr. Rumbold ’E’s a very quiet man ’E likes everything Quiet He’ll be surprised to see me ’ere ! Why ! there ’E is !” She fumbled in her garments mysteriously, and at last produced a wrinkled pocket-handkerchief and began to wave it

“Oh, come ON !” cried Mr. Polly, and seized her.

He got her into the attic, but the staircase, he found, was full of suffocating smoke, and he dared not venture below the next floor. He took her into a long dormitory, shut the door on those pungent and pervasive fumes, and opened the window, to discover the fire-escape was now against the house, and all Fishbourne boiling with excitement as an immensely helmeted and active and resolute little figure ascended. In another moment the rescuer stared over the window-sill, heroic but just a trifle self-conscious and grotesque

“Lawks-a-mussy !” said the old lady “Wonders and Wonders ! Why ! it’s Mr. Gambell ! ’Iding ’is ’ead in that thing ! I *never* did !”

“Can we get her out ?” said Mr. Gambell
“There’s not much time”

“He might get stuck in it”

MR. POLLY TO THE RESCUE

"*You'll* get stuck in it," said Mr. Polly, "come along!"

"Not for jumpin' I don't," said the old lady, understanding his gestures rather than his words. "Not a bit of it. I bain't no good at jumping, and I *wun't*."

They urged her gently but firmly towards the window.

"You lemme do it my own way," said the old lady at the sill.

"I could do it better if 'e'd take it off"

"Oh! *carm on!*"

"It's wuss than Carter's stile," she said, "before they mended it—with a cow looking at you"

Mr. Gambell hovered protectingly below. Mr. Polly steered her aged limbs from above. An anxious crowd below babbled advice and did its best to upset the fire-escape. Within, streamers of black smoke were pouring up through cracks in the floor. For some seconds the world waited while the old lady gave herself up to reckless mirth again. "*Sich times!*" she said. "Poor Rumbold!"

Slowly they descended, and Mr. Polly remained at the post of danger, steadying the long ladder, until the old lady was in safety below and sheltered by Mr. Rumbold (who was in tears) and the young policeman from the urgent congratulations of the crowd. The crowd was full of an impotent passion to participate. Those nearest wanted to shake her hand, those remoter cheered.

"The fust fire I was ever in, and likely to be my last. It's a scurryin', 'urryin' business, but I'm real glad I haven't missed it," said the old lady, as she was borne rather than led towards the refuge of the Temperance Hotel.

Also she was heard to remark: "'E was saying something about 'ot chestnuts. I haven't 'ad no 'ot chestnuts."

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Then the crowd became aware of Mr. Polly awkwardly negotiating the top rungs of the fire-escape 'Ere 'e comes !' " cried a voice , and Mr. Polly descended into the world again out of the conflagration, moist, excited, and tremendously alive, amidst a tempest of applause. As he got lower and lower, the crowd howled like a pack of dogs at him. Impatient men, unable to wait for him, seized and shook his descending boots, and so brought him to earth with a run

H. G. WELLS

PETER STAYS OUT

Peter was glad that the rest of the room was busied once more with its talking, laughing, and drinking, and some old man (sitting on a table and his nose coming through the tobacco-smoke like a rat through a hole in the wall) had struck up a tune on a fiddle. Peter was glad, because no one watched them together. He liked to meet Stephen in private. He buried his small hand in the brown depths of Stephen's large one, and then as Stephen looked uncertainly round the room, he whispered " Steve—my chair, and me sitting on you—please "

It was a piece of impertinence to call him " Steve," of course, and when other people were there it was " Mr. Brant," but in their own privacy it was their own affair. Peter slipped down from his chair, and Stephen sat down on it, and then Peter was lifted up and leant his head back somewhere against the middle button of Stephen's waistcoat, just where his heart was noisiest, and he could feel the hard outline of Stephen's enormous silver watch that his family had had, so Stephen said, for a hundred years. Now was the blissful time, the perfect moment. The rest

PETER STAYS OUT

of the world was busied with life—the window showed the dull and then suddenly shining flakes of snow, the lights and the limitless sea—the room showed the sanded floor, the crowd of fishermen drinking, their feet moving already to the tune of the fiddle, the fisher girls with their coloured shawls, the great, swinging smoky lamp, the huge fire, Dicky the Fool, Mother Figgis, fat Sam the host, old Frosted Moses . . . the gay romantic world—and these two in their corner, and Peter so happy that no beatings in the world could terrify

“But, boy,” says Stephen, bending down so that the end of his beard tickles Peter’s neck, “what are yer doing here so late? Your father . . .?”

“I’m going back to be beaten, of course.”

“If yer go now perhaps yer won’t be beaten so bad?”

“Oh, Steve! . . . I’m staying . . . like this . . . always.”

But Peter knew, in spite of the way that the big brown hand pressed his white one in sympathy, that Stephen was worried and that he was thinking of something. He knew, although he could not see, that Stephen’s eyes were staring right across the room and that they were looking, in the way that they had, past walls and windows and streets—somewhere for something. . . .

Peter knew a little about Stephen’s trouble. He did not understand it altogether, but he had seen the change in Stephen, and he knew that he was often very sad, and that moods came upon him when he could do nothing but think and watch and wait—and then his face grew very grey and his eyes very hard, and his hands were clenched. Peter knew that Stephen had an enemy, and that one day he would meet him.

Some of the men and girls were dancing now in the

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middle of the room. The floor and the walls shook a little with the noise that the heavy boots of the fishermen made and the smoky lamp swung from side to side. The heat was great and some one opened the window and the snow came swirling, in little waves and eddies, in and out, blown by the breeze—dark and heavy outside against the clouded sky, white and delicate and swiftly vanishing in the room. Dicky the Fool came across the floor and talked to Stephen in his smiling rambling way. People pitied Dicky and shook their heads when his name was mentioned, but Peter never could understand this because the Fool seemed always to be happy and cheerful, and he saw so many things that other people never saw at all. It was only when he was drunk that he was unhappy, and he was pleased with such very little things, and he told such *wonderful* stories.

Stephen was always kind to the Fool, and the Fool worshipped him, but to-night Peter saw that he was paying no heed to the Fool's talk. The Fool had a story about three stars that he had seen rolling down the Grey Hill, and behold, when they got to the bottom—"little bright nickety things, like new sax-pennies—it was suddenly so dark that Dicky had to light his lantern and grope his way home with that, and all the frogs began croaking down in the marsh 'something terrible'—now what was the meaning of that?"

But Stephen was paying no attention. His eyes were set on the open window and the drifting snow. Men came in stamping their great boots on the floor and rubbing their hands together—the fiddle was playing more madly than ever—and at every moment some couple would stop under the mistletoe and the girl would scream and laugh, and the man's kiss could be heard all over the room; through the open window came the sound of church bells.

PETER STAYS OUT

Stephen bent down and whispered in the boy's ear - "Yer'd best be going now, Peter, lad 'Tis half-past nine and, mebbe, if yer go back now yer lickin' 'ull not be so bad "

But Peter whispered back " Not yet, Stephen—a little while longer."

Peter was tremendously excited He could never remember being quite so excited before. It was all very thrilling, of course, with the dancing and the music and the lights, but there was more than that in it Stephen was so unlike himself, but then possibly Christmas made him sad, because he would be thinking of last Christmas and the happy time that he had had because his girl had been with him—but there was more than that in it Then, suddenly, a curious thing happened to Peter. He was not asleep, he was not even drowsy—he was sitting with his eyes wide open, staring at the window He saw the window with its dark frame, and he saw the snow

. and then, in an instant, the room, the people, the music, the tramping of feet, the roar of voices, these things were all swept away, and instead there was absolute stillness, only the noise that a little wind makes when it rustles through the blades of grass, and above him rose the Grey Hill with its funny sugar-loaf top and against it heavy black clouds were driving—outlined sharply against the sky was the straight stone pillar that stood on the summit of the Grey Hill and was called by the people the Giant's Finger He could hear some sheep crying in the distance and the tinkling of their bells. Then suddenly the picture was swept away, and the room and the people and the dancing were before him and around him once more He was not surprised by this—it had happened to him before at the most curious times ; he had seen, in the same way, the Grey Hill and the Giant's Finger and he had

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felt the cold wind about his neck, and always something had happened

"Stephen," he whispered, "Stephen——"

But Stephen's hand was crushing his hand like an iron glove, and Stephen's eyes were staring, like the eyes of a wild animal, at the door. A man, a short, square man with a muffler round his throat, and a little mouth and little ears, had come in and was standing by the door, looking round the room.

Stephen whispered gently in Peter's ear. "Run home, Peter boy," and he kissed him very softly on the cheek—then he put him down on the floor.

Stephen rose from his chair and stood for an instant staring at the door. Then he walked across the room, brushing the people aside, and tapped the little man with the muffler on the shoulder :

"Samuel Burstead," he said, "good evenin' to yer "

All the room seemed to cease moving and talking at the moment when Stephen Brant said that. They stood where they were like the people in the *Sleeping Beauty*, and Peter climbed up on to his chair again to see what was going to happen. He pulled up his stockings, and then sat forward in his chair with his eyes gazing at Stephen and his hands very tightly clenched. When, afterwards, he grew up and thought at all about his childhood, this scene always remained, over and beyond all the others. He wondered sometimes why it was that he remembered it all so clearly, that he had it so dramatically and forcibly before him, when many more recent happenings were clouded and dull, but when he was older he knew that it was because it stood for so much of his life, it was because that Christmas Eve in those dim days was really the beginning of everything, and in the later interpretation of it so much might be understood.

PETER STAYS OUT

But, to a boy of that age, the things that stood out were not, of necessity, the right things, and any unreality that it might have had was due perhaps to his fastening on the incidental, fantastic things that a small child notices, always more vividly than a grown person. In the very first instant of Stephen's speaking to the man with the muffler it was Dicky the Fool's open mouth and staring eyes that showed Peter how important it was. The Fool had risen from his chair and was standing leaning forward, his back black against the blazing fire, his silly mouth agape and great terror in his eyes. Being odd in his mind, he felt perhaps something in the air that the others did not feel, and Peter seemed to catch fright from his staring eyes.

The man at the door had turned round when Stephen Brant spoke to him, and had pushed his way out of the crowd of men and stood alone fingering his neck.

"I'm here, Stephen Brant, if yer want me."

Sam Figgis came forward then and said something to Stephen, and then shrugged his shoulders and went back to his wife. He seemed to feel that no one could interfere between the two men—it was too late for interference. Then things happened very quickly. Peter saw that they had all—men and women—crowded back against the benches and the wall and were watching, very silently and with great excitement. He found it very difficult to see, but he bent his head and peered through the legs of a big fisherman in front of him. He was shaking all over his body. Stephen had never before appeared so terrible to him, he had seen him when he was very angry and when he was cross and ill-tempered, but now he was very ominous in his quiet way, and his eyes seemed to have changed colour. The small boy could only see the middle of the floor and pieces of

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legs and skirts and trousers, but he knew by the feeling in the room that Stephen and the little man were going to fight. Then he moved his head round and saw between two shoulders, and he saw that the two men were stripping to the waist. The centre of the room was cleared, and Sam Figgis came forward to speak to Stephen again, and this time there was more noise, and people began to shout out loud and the men grew more and more excited. There had often been fights in that room before, and Peter had witnessed one or two, but there had never been this solemnity and ceremony—every one was very grave. It did not occur to Peter that it was odd that it should be allowed, no one thought of policemen twenty years ago in Treliss, and Sam Figgis was more of a monarch in *The Bending Mule* than Queen Victoria. And now two of the famous old chairs were placed at opposite corners, and quite silently two men, with serious faces, as though this were the most important hour of their life, stood behind them. Stephen and the other man, stripped to their woollen drawers, came into the middle of the room. Stephen had hair on his chest, and his arms and his neck were tremendous, and Peter, as he looked at him, thought that he must be the strongest man in the world. His enemy was smooth and shiny, but he seemed very strong, and you could see the muscles of his arms and legs move under his skin. Some one had marked a circle with chalk, and all the men and women, quite silent now, made a dark line along the wall. The lamp in the middle of the room was still swinging a little, and they had forgotten to close the window, so that the snow, which was falling more lightly now, came in little clouds, with breaths of wind, into the room—and the bells were yet pealing and could be heard very plainly against the silence.

Then Sam Figgis, who was standing with his legs

PETER STAYS OUT

wide apart, said something that Peter could not catch, and a little sigh of excitement went up all round the room. Peter, who was clutching his chair with both hands, and choking, very painfully, in his throat, knew, although he had no reason for his knowledge, that the little man with the shining chest meant to kill Stephen if he could.

The two men moved round the circle very slowly with their fists clenched and their eyes watching every movement—then, suddenly, they closed. At once Peter saw that the little man was very clever, cleverer than Stephen. He moved with amazing quickness. Stephen's blows came like sledge-hammers, and sometimes they fell with a dull heavy sound on the other man's face and on his chest, but more often they missed altogether. The man seemed to be everywhere at once, and although the blows that he gave Stephen seemed to have little effect, yet he got past the other's defence again and again.

Then, again, the figures in front of Peter closed in and he saw nothing. He stood on his chair—no one noticed him now—but he could not see. His face was very white, and his stockings had fallen down over his boots, but with every moment he was growing more afraid. He caught an instant's vision of Stephen's face, and he saw that it was white and that he was breathing hard. The room seemed to be ominously silent, and then men would break out into strange threatening sounds, and Peter could see one woman—a young girl—with a red shawl about her shoulders, her back against the wall, staring with a white face.

He could not see—he could not see . . .

He murmured once very politely—he thought he said it aloud but it was really under his breath
“Please, please—would you mind—if you stood aside

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—just a little . . .” but the man in front of him was absorbed and heard nothing. Then he knew that there was a pause, he caught a glimpse of the brick floor and he saw that Stephen was sitting back in his chair—his face was white, and blood was trickling out from the corner of his mouth on to his beard. Then Peter remembered old Frosted Moses’ words : “The courage you bring to it . . .” and he sat back in his chair again and, with hands clenched, waited. He would be brave, braver than he had ever been before, and perhaps in some strange way his bravery would help Stephen. He determined with all the power that he had to be brave. They had begun again, he heard the sound of the blows, the movement of the men’s feet on the rough brick of the floor, people cried out, the man in front of him pressed forward and he had a sudden view. Stephen was on one knee and his head was down and the other man was standing over him. It was all over—Stephen was beaten—Stephen would be killed, and in another minute Peter would have pushed past the people and run into the middle of the room, but Sam Figgis had again come forward, and the two men were in their chairs again. There followed another terrible time when Peter could see nothing. He waited—he could hear them moving again, the noise of their breathing and of their feet, the men in the crowd were pressing nearer, but there was no word spoken.

He must see—at all costs he must see. And he climbed down from his chair, and crept unnoticed towards the front. Nobody saw him or realised him. . . . Stephen was bending back, he seemed to be slowly sinking down. The other man, from whose face blood was now streaming, was pressing on to him. Peter knew that it was all over and that there was no hope; there was a dreadful cold, hard pain

PETER STAYS OUT

in his throat, and he could scarcely see. Courage! he must have it for Stephen. With every bit of his soul and his mind and his body he was brave. He stood taut—his little legs stiff beneath him—and flung defiance at the world. He and Stephen were fighting that shiny man together—both of them—now. Courage! Stephen's head lifted a little, and then slowly Peter saw him pulling his body together—he grew rigid, he was on his defence, and then suddenly his fist was in his enemy's face. The man dropped without a word and lay motionless. It was over. Stephen gravely watched for a moment the senseless body and then sat back in his chair, his head bowed on his chest.

The fight had not, perhaps, been like that—there must have been many other things that happened, but that was always how Peter remembered it. And now there was confusion—a great deal of noise and people talking very loudly, but Stephen said nothing at all. He did not look at the body again, but when he had recovered a little, still without a word to any one and with his eyes grave and without expression, he moved to the corner where his clothes lay.

“ 'E's not dead ”

“ No—give 'im room there, he's moving,” and from the back of the crowd the Fool's silly face, peering over . . .

Peter crept unnoticed to the door. The clocks were striking ten, and some one in the street was singing. He pulled up his stockings and fastened his garters, then he slipped out into the snow and saw that the sky was full of stars and that the storm had passed.

HUGH WALPOLE

FACT AND FICTION

SPARROWS ON THE HOusetops

WHAT vexed us most was our hunger. Barring a few mouthfuls on the road we had eaten nothing since the morning, and as our diet for the past days had not been generous we had some leeway to make up. Stumm had never looked near us since we were shoved into the car. We had been brought to some kind of house and bundled into a place like a wine-cellar. It was pitch dark, and after feeling round the walls, first on my feet and then on Peter's back, I decided that there were no windows. It must have been lit and ventilated by some lattice in the ceiling. There was not a stick of furniture in the place - nothing but a damp earth floor and bare stone sides. The door was a relic of the Iron Age, and I could hear the paces of a sentry outside it.

When things get to the pass that nothing you can do can better them, the only thing is to live for the moment. All three of us sought in sleep a refuge from our empty stomachs. The floor was the poorest kind of bed, but we rolled up our coats for pillows and made the best of it. Soon I knew by Peter's regular breathing that he was asleep, and I presently followed him . . .

I was awakened by a pressure below my left ear. I thought it was Peter, for it is the old hunter's trick of waking a man so that he makes no noise. But another voice spoke. It told me that there was no time to lose and to rise and follow, and the voice was the voice of Hussin.

Peter was awake, and we stirred Blenkiron out of heavy slumber. We were bidden take off our boots and hang them by their laces round our necks, as country boys do when they want to go barefoot. Then we tiptoed to the door, which was ajar.

SPARROWS ON THE HOUSETOPS

Outside was a passage with a flight of steps at one end which led to the open air. On these steps lay a faint shine of starlight, and by its help I saw a man huddled up at the foot of them. It was our sentry, neatly and scientifically gagged and tied up.

The steps brought us to a little courtyard about which the walls of the houses rose like cliffs. We halted while Hussin listened intently. Apparently the coast was clear, and our guide led us to one side, which was clothed by a stout wooden trellis. Once it may have supported fig trees, but now the plants were dead and only withered tendrils and rotten stumps remained.

It was child's play for Peter and me to go up that trellis, but it was the deuce and all for Blenkiron. He was in poor condition and puffed like a grampus, and he seemed to have no sort of head for heights. But he was as game as a buffalo, and started in gallantly till his arms gave out and he fairly stuck. So Peter and I went up on each side of him, taking an arm apiece, as I had once seen done to a man with vertigo in the Kloof Chimney on Table Mountain. I was mighty thankful when I got him panting on the top and Hussin had shinned up beside us.

We crawled along a broadish wall, with an inch or two of powdery snow on it, and then up a sloping buttress on to the flat roof of the house. It was a miserable business for Blenkiron, who would certainly have fallen if he could have seen what was below him, and Peter and I had to stand to attention all the time. Then began a more difficult job. Hussin pointed out a ledge which took us past a stack of chimneys to another building slightly lower, this being the route he fancied. At that I sat down resolutely and put on my boots, and the others followed. Frost-bitten feet would be a poor asset in this kind of travelling.

It was a bad step for Blenkiron, and we only got

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him past it by Peter and I spread-eagling ourselves against the wall and passing him in front of us with his face towards us. We had no grip, and if he had stumbled we should all three have been in the courtyard. But we got it over, and dropped as softly as possible on to the roof of the next house. Hussin had his finger to his lips, and I soon saw why. For there was a lighted window in the wall we had descended.

Some imp prompted me to wait behind and explore. The others followed Hussin and were soon at the far end of the roof, where a kind of wooden pavilion broke the line, while I tried to get a look inside. The window was curtained, and had two folding sashes which clasped in the middle. Through a gap in the curtain I saw a little lamp-lit room and a big man sitting at a table littered with papers.

I watched him, fascinated, as he turned to consult some document and made a marking on the map before him. Then he suddenly rose, stretched himself, cast a glance at the window, and went out of the room, making a great clatter in descending the wooden staircase. He left the door ajar and the lamp burning.

I guessed he had gone to have a look at his prisoners, in which case the show was up. But what filled my mind was an insane desire to get a sight of his map. It was one of those mad impulses which utterly cloud right reason, a thing independent of any plan, a crazy leap in the dark. But it was so strong that I would have pulled that window out by its frame, if need be, to get to that table.

There was no need, for the flimsy clasp gave at the first pull, and the sashes swung open. I scrambled in, after listening for steps on the stairs. I crumpled up the map and stuck it in my pocket, as well as the paper from which I had seen him copying. Very carefully I removed all marks of my entry, brushed

SPARROWS ON THE ROOFTOPS

away the snow from the boards, pulled back the curtain, got out and refastened the window. Still there was no sound of his return. Then I started off to catch up the others.

I found them shivering in the roof pavilion. "We've got to move pretty fast," I said, "for I've just been burgling old Stumm's private cabinet. Hussin, my lad, d'you hear that? They may be after us any moment, so I pray Heaven we soon strike better going."

Hussin understood. He led us at a smart pace from one roof to another, for here they were all of the same height, and only low parapets and screens divided them. We never saw a soul, for a winter's night is not the time you choose to saunter on your housetop. I kept my ears open for trouble behind us, and in about five minutes I heard it. A riot of voices broke out, with one louder than the rest, and, looking back, I saw lanterns waving. Stumm had realised his loss and found the tracks of the thief.

Hussin gave one glance behind and then hurried us on at a breakneck pace, with old Blenkiron gasping and stumbling. The shouts behind us grew louder, as if some eye quicker than the rest had caught our movement in the starlit darkness. It was very evident that if they kept up the chase we should be caught, for Blenkiron was about as useful on a roof as a hippo.

Presently we came to a big drop, with a kind of ladder down it, and at the foot a shallow ledge running to the left into a pit of darkness. Hussin gripped my arm and pointed down it. "Follow it," he whispered, "and you will reach a roof which spans a street. Cross it, and on the other side is a mosque. Turn to the right there and you will find easy going for fifty metres, well screened from the higher roofs. For Allah's sake, keep in the shelter of the screen. Somewhere there I will join you."

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He hurried us along the ledge for a bit and then went back, and with snow from the corners covered up our tracks. After that he went straight on himself, taking strange short steps like a bird. I saw his game. He wanted to lead our pursuers after him, and he had to multiply the tracks, and trust to Stumm's fellows not spotting that they all were made by one man.

But I had quite enough to think of in getting Blenkiron along that ledge. He was pretty nearly foundered, he was in a sweat of terror, and as a matter of fact he was taking one of the biggest risks of his life, for we had no rope and his neck depended on himself. I could hear him invoking some unknown deity called Holy Mike. But he ventured gallantly, and we got to the roof which ran across the street. That was easier, though ticklish enough, but it was no joke skirting the cupola of that infernal mosque. At last we found the parapet and breathed more freely, for we were now under shelter from the direction of danger. I spared a moment to look round, and thirty yards off, across the street, I saw a weird spectacle.

The hunt was proceeding along the roofs parallel to the one we were lodged on. I saw the flicker of the lanterns, waved up and down as the bearers slipped in the snow, and I heard their cries like hounds on a trail. Stumm was not among them—he had not the shape for that sort of business. They passed us and continued to our left, now hid by a jutting chimney, now clear to view against the sky line. The roofs they were on were perhaps six feet higher than ours, so even from our shelter we could mark their course. If Hussin were going to be hunted across Erzerum it was a bad look-out for us, for I hadn't the foggiest notion where we were or where we were going to.

SPARROWS ON THE HOUSETOPS

But as we watched we saw something more. The wavering lanterns were now three or four hundred yards away, but on the roofs just opposite us across the street there appeared a man's figure. I thought it was one of the hunters, and we all crouched lower, and then I recognised the lean agility of Hussin. He must have doubled back, keeping in the dusk to the left of the pursuit, and taking big risks in the open places. But there he was now, exactly in front of us, and separated only by the width of the narrow street.

He took a step backward, gathered himself for a spring, and leaped clean over the gap. Like a cat he lighted on the parapet above us, and stumbled forward with the impetus right on our heads.

"We are safe for the moment," he whispered, "but when they miss me they will return. We must make good haste."

The next half-hour was a maze of twists and turns, slipping down icy roofs and climbing icier chimney-stacks. The stir of the city had gone, and from the black streets below came scarcely a sound. But always the great tattoo of guns beat in the east. Gradually we descended to a lower level, till we emerged on the top of a shed in a courtyard. Hussin gave an odd sort of cry, like a demented owl, and something began to stir below us.

It was a big covered wagon, full of bundles of forage, and drawn by four mules. As we descended from the shed into the frozen litter of the yard, a man came out of the shade and spoke low to Hussin. Peter and I lifted Blenkiron into the cart, and scrambled in beside him, and I never felt anything more blessed than the warmth and softness of that place after the frosty roofs. I had forgotten all about my hunger, and only yearned for sleep. Presently the wagon moved out of the courtyard into the dark streets.

Then Blenkiron began to laugh, a deep internal

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rumble which shook him violently and brought down a heap of forage on his head I thought it was hysterics, the relief from the tension of the past hour. But it wasn't. His body might be out of training, but there was never anything the matter with his nerves. He was consumed with honest merriment.

"Say, Major," he gasped, "I don't usually cherish dislikes for my fellow-men, but somehow I didn't cotton to Colonel Stumm. But now I almost love him. You hit his jaw very bad in Germany, and now you've annexed his private file, and I guess it's important or he wouldn't have been so mighty set on steeplechasing over those roofs. I haven't done such a thing since I broke into neighbour Brown's woodshed to steal his tame 'possum, and that's forty years back. It's the first piece of genuine amusement I've struck in this game, and I haven't laughed so much since old Jim Hooker told the tale of 'Cousin Sally Dillard' when we were hunting ducks in Michigan and his wife's brother had an apoplexy in the night and died of it."

To the accompaniment of Blenkiron's chuckles I did what Peter had done in the first minute, and fell asleep.

JOHN BUCHAN

MANY LANDS

BREAKING WILD HORSES

ONE evening a "dormidor" (a subduer of horses) came for the purpose of breaking-in some colts. I will describe the preparatory steps, for I believe they have not been mentioned by other travellers. A troop of wild young horses is driven into the corral, or large enclosure of stakes, and the door is shut. We will suppose that one man alone has to catch and mount a horse, which as yet had never felt bridle or saddle. I conceive, except by a Gaucho, such a feat would be utterly impracticable. The Gaucho picks out a full-grown colt, and as the beast rushes round the circus, he throws his lazo so as to catch both the front legs. Instantly the horse rolls over with a heavy shock, and whilst struggling on the ground, the Gaucho, holding the lazo tight, makes a circle, so as to catch one of the hind legs, just beneath the fetlock, and draws it close to the two front legs: he then hitches the lazo, so that the three are bound together. Then sitting on the horse's neck, he fixes a strong bridle, without a bit, to the lower jaw: this he does by passing a narrow thong through the eye-holes at the end of the reins, and several times round both jaw and tongue. The two front legs are now tied closely together with a strong leathern thong, fastened by a slip-knot. The lazo, which bound the three together, being then loosed, the horse rises with difficulty. The Gaucho now holding fast the bridle fixed to the lower jaw, leads the horse outside the corral. If a second man is present (otherwise the

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trouble is much greater) he holds the animal's head, whilst the first puts on the horse-cloths and saddle and girths the whole together. During this operation, the horse, from dread and astonishment at thus being bound round the waist, throws himself over and over again on the ground, and, till beaten, is unwilling to rise. At last, when the saddling is finished, the poor animal can hardly breathe from fear, and is white with foam and sweat. The man now prepares to mount by pressing heavily on the stirrup, so that the horse may not lose its balance, and at the moment that he throws his leg over the animal's back, he pulls the slip-knot binding the front legs, and the beast is free. Some "dormidors" pull the knot while the animal is lying on the ground, and, standing over the saddle, allow him to rise beneath them. The horse, wild with dread, gives a few most violent bounds, and then starts off at full gallop. When quite exhausted, the man, by patience, brings him back to the corral, where, reeking hot and scarcely alive, the poor beast is let free. Those animals which will not gallop away, but obstinately throw themselves on the ground, are by far the most troublesome. This process is tremendously severe, but in two or three trials the horse is tamed. It is not, however, for some weeks that the animal is ridden with the iron bit and solid ring, for it must learn to associate the will of its rider with the feel of the rein, before the most powerful bridle can be of any service.

The Gauchos are well known to be perfect riders. The idea of being thrown, let the horse do what it likes, never enters their head. Their criterion of a good rider is a man who can manage an untamed colt, or who, if his horse falls, alights on his own feet, or can perform other such exploits. I have heard of a man betting that he would throw his horse down twenty times, and that nineteen times he would

BREAKING WILD HORSES

not fall himself I recollect seeing a Gaucho riding a very stubborn horse, which three times successively reared so high as to fall backwards with great violence. The man judged with uncommon coolness the proper moment for slipping off, not an instant before or after the right time, and as soon as the horse got up, the man jumped on his back, and at last they started at a gallop. The Gaucho never appears to exert any muscular force. I was one day watching a good rider, as we were galloping along at a rapid pace, and thought to myself, "surely if the horse starts, you appear so careless on your seat, you must fall." At this moment, a male ostrich sprang from its nest right beneath the horse's nose: the young colt bounded on one side like a stag; but as for the man, all that could be said was, that he started and took fright with his horse.

In Chile and Peru more pains are taken with the mouth of the horse than in La Plata, and this is evidently a consequence of the more intricate nature of the country. In Chile a horse is not considered perfectly broken till he can be brought up standing, in the midst of his full speed, on any particular spot,—for instance, on a cloak thrown on the ground. or, again, he will charge a wall, and rearing, scrape the surface with his hoofs. I have seen an animal bounding with spirit, yet merely reined by a fore-finger and thumb, taken at full gallop across a courtyard, and then made to wheel round the post of a verandah with great speed, but at so equal a distance, that the rider, with outstretched arm, all the while kept one finger rubbing the post. Then making a demi-volte in the air, with the other arm outstretched in a like manner, he wheeled round, with astonishing force, in an opposite direction.

Such a horse is well broken; and although this at first may appear useless, it is far otherwise. It is

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only carrying that which is daily necessary into perfection. When a bullock is checked and caught by the lazo, it will sometimes gallop round and round in a circle, and the horse being alarmed at the great strain, if not well broken, will not readily turn like the pivot of a wheel. In consequence many men have been killed, for if the lazo once takes a twist round a man's body, it will instantly, from the power of the two opposed animals, almost cut him in twain. On the same principle the races are managed, the course is only two or three hundred yards long, the wish being to have horses that can make a rapid dash. The race-horses are trained not only to stand with their hoofs touching a line, but to draw all four feet together, so as at the first spring to bring into play the full action of the hind-quarters. In Chile I was told an anecdote, which I believe was true, and it offers a good illustration of the use of a well-broken animal. A respectable man riding one day met two others, one of whom was mounted on a horse which he knew to have been stolen from himself. He challenged them, they answered him by drawing their sabres and giving chase. The man, on his good and fleet beast, kept just ahead. as he passed a thick bush he wheeled round it, and brought up his horse to a dead check. The pursuers were obliged to shoot on one side and ahead. Then instantly dashing on, right behind them, he buried his knife in the back of one, wounded the other, recovered his horse from the dying robber, and rode home. For these feats of horsemanship two things are necessary. a most severe bit, like the Mameluke, the power of which, though seldom used, the horse knows full well; and large blunt spurs, that can be applied either as a mere touch, or as an instrument of extreme pain.

CHARLES DARWIN

BLUBBER

BLUBBER

In the first place, the enormous cutting tackles, among other ponderous things comprising a cluster of blocks generally painted green, and which no single man can possibly lift—this vast bunch of grapes was swayed up to the main-top and firmly lashed to the lower mast-head, the strongest point anywhere above a ship's deck. The end of the hawser-like rope winding through these intricacies was then conducted to the windlass, and the huge lower block of the tackles was swung over the whale, to this block the great blubber hook, weighing some one hundred pounds, was attached

And now suspended in stages over the side, Starbuck and Stubb, the mates, armed with their long spades, began cutting a hole in the body for the insertion of the hook just above the nearest of the two side-fins. This done, a broad, semicircular line is cut round the hole, the hook is inserted, and the main body of the crew striking up a wild chorus, now commence heaving in one dense crowd at the windlass. When instantly the entire ship careens over on her side, every bolt in her starts like the nail-heads of an old house in frosty weather, she trembles, quivers, and nods her frightened mast-heads to the sky. More and more she leans over to the whale, while every gasping heave of the windlass is answered by a helping heave from the billows, till at last, a swift, startling snap is heard; with a great swash the ship rolls upwards and backwards from the whale, and the triumphant tackle rises into sight dragging after it the disengaged semicircular end of the first strip of blubber. Now as the blubber envelopes the whale precisely as the rind does an orange, so is it stripped off from the body precisely as an orange is sometimes

FACT AND FICTION

stripped by spiralising it. For the strain constantly kept up by the windlass continually keeps the whale rolling over and over in the water, and as the blubber in one strip uniformly peels off along the line called the "scarf," simultaneously cut by the spades of Starbuck and Stubb, the mates, and just as fast as it is thus peeled off, and indeed by that very act itself, it is all the time being hoisted higher and higher aloft till its upper end grazes the main-top, the men at the windlass then cease heaving, and for a moment or two the prodigious blood-dripping mass sways to and fro as if let down from the sky, and every one present must take good heed to dodge it when it swings, else it may box his ears and pitch him headlong overboard.

One of the attending harpooners now advances with a long, keen weapon called a boarding-sword, and watching his chance he dexterously slices out a considerable hole in the lower part of the swaying mass. Into this hole, the end of the second alternating great tackle is then hooked so as to retain a hold upon the blubber, in order to prepare for what follows. Whereupon this accomplished swordsman, warning all hands to stand off, once more makes a scientific dash at the mass, and with a few sidelong, desperate, lunging slicings, severs it completely in twain, so that while the short lower part is still fast, the long upper strip, called a blanket-piece, swings clear, and is all ready for lowering. The heavers forward now resume their song, and while the one tackle is peeling and hoisting a second strip from the whale, the other is slowly slackened away, and down goes the first strip through the main hatchway right beneath, into an unfurnished parlour called the blubber-room. Into this twilight apartment sundry nimble hands keep coiling away the long blanket-piece as if it were a great live mass of plaited ser-

HUNTING IN THE AMAZON FOREST

pents. And thus the work proceeds, the two tackles hoisting and lowering simultaneously, both whale and windlass heaving, the heavers singing, the blubber-room gentlemen coiling, the mates scarfing, the ship straining, and all hands swearing occasionally, by way of assuaging the general friction.

“Haul in the chains! Let the carcase go astern!”

The vast tackles have now done their duty. The peeled white body of the beheaded whale flashes like a marble sepulchre; though changed in hue, it has not perceptibly lost anything in bulk. It is still colossal. Slowly it floats more and more away, the water round it torn and splashed by the insatiate sharks, and the air above vexed with rapacious flights of screaming fowls, whose beaks are like so many insulting poniards in the whale. The vast white headless phantom floats farther and farther from the ship, and every rod that it so floats, what seem square roods of sharks and cubic roods of fowls augment the murderous din. For hours and hours from the almost stationary ship that hideous sight is seen. Beneath the unclouded and mild azure sky, upon the fair face of the pleasant sea, wafted by the joyous breezes, that great mass of death floats on and on, till lost in infinite perspectives.

HERMAN MELVILLE

HUNTING IN THE AMAZON FOREST

THE hunting trip was undertaken in company with three friendly young half-castes. We were accompanied by an Indian named Lino, and a Mulatto boy, whose office was to carry our game.

Our proposed hunting-ground on this occasion lay across the water, about fifteen miles distant. We set out at four o'clock in the morning, leaving the

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encampment asleep We gained our destination a little after daybreak, this was the banks of the Carapanatúba, a channel some 150 yards in width. To reach this we had to cross the river, here nearly two miles wide. Just as the day dawned we saw a cayman seize a large fish near the surface, the reptile seemed to have a difficulty in securing its prey, for it reared itself above the water, tossing the fish in its jaws, and making a tremendous commotion. I was much struck also by the singular appearance presented by certain diving birds having very long and snaky necks. Occasionally a long serpentine form would suddenly wriggle itself to a height of a foot and a half above the glassy surface of the water, producing such an effective imitation of a snake that at first I had some difficulty in believing it to be the neck of a bird, it did not remain long in view, but soon plunged again beneath the stream.

We ran ashore in a most lonely and gloomy place, on a low sand-bank covered with bushes, secured the canoe to a tree, and then, after making a very sparing breakfast on fried fish and mandioca meal, rolled up our trousers and plunged into the thick forest, which here, as everywhere else, rose like a lofty wall of foliage from the narrow strip of beach. We made straight for the heart of the land, breaking off at every few steps a branch of the lower trees, so that we might recognise the path on our return. The district was quite new to all my companions, and being on a coast almost totally uninhabited by human beings for some 300 miles, to lose our way would have been to perish helplessly. I did not think at the time of the risk we ran of having our canoe stolen by passing Indians. No misgivings clouded the lightness of heart with which we trod forwards in warm anticipation of a good day's sport.

The tract of forest through which we passed con-

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sisted of a most bewildering diversity of grand and beautiful trees, draped, festooned, corded, matted, and ribboned with climbing plants, woody and succulent, in endless variety. The most prevalent palm was the *Astryocaryum Janari*, whose fallen spines made it necessary to pick our way carefully over the ground, as we were all barefoot. There was not much green underwood, except in places where bamboos grew; these formed impenetrable thickets of plummy foliage and thorny jointed stems, which always compelled us to make a circuit to avoid them. The earth elsewhere was encumbered with rotting fruits, gigantic bean-pods, leaves, limbs, and trunks of trees, fixing the impression of its being the cemetery as well as the birthplace of the great world of vegetation overhead. Some of the trees were of prodigious height. We passed many specimens of the *Moratinga*, whose cylindrical trunks, I dare not say how many feet in circumference, towered up and were lost amidst the crowns of the lower trees, their lower branches, in some cases, being hidden from our view.

After walking about half a mile we came upon a dry watercourse, where we observed, first, the old foot-marks of a tapir, and, soon after, on the margin of a curious circular hole full of muddy water, the fresh tracks of a jaguar. This latter discovery was hardly made when a rush was heard amidst the bushes on the top of a sloping bank on the opposite side of the dried creek. We bounded forward, it was, however, too late, for the animal had sped in a few minutes far out of our reach. It was clear we had disturbed, on our approach, the jaguar, whilst quenching his thirst at the water-hole. A few steps farther on we saw the mangled remains of an alligator. The head, fore-quarters, and bony shell were the only parts which remained; but the meat was quite fresh,

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and there were many footmarks of the jaguar round the carcase, so that there was no doubt this had formed the solid part of the animal's breakfast. My companions now began to search for the alligator's nest, the presence of the reptile so far from the river being accountable for on no other ground than its maternal solicitude for its eggs. We found, in fact, the nest at the distance of a few yards from the place. It was a conical pile of dried leaves, in the middle of which twenty eggs were buried. These were of elliptical shape, considerably larger than those of a duck, and having a hard shell of the texture of porcelain, but very rough on the outside. They made a loud sound when rubbed together, and it is said that it is easy to find a mother alligator in the forests by rubbing together two eggs in this way, she being never far off, and attracted by the sounds.

I put half a dozen of the alligator's eggs in my game-bag for specimens, and we then continued on our way. Lino, who was now first, presently made a start backwards, calling out "Jararaca!" This is the name of a poisonous snake, which is far more dreaded by the natives than jaguar or alligator. The individual seen by Lino lay coiled up at the foot of a tree, and was scarcely distinguishable, on account of the colours of its body being assimilated to those of the fallen leaves. Its hideous flat triangular head, connected with the body by a thin neck, was reared and turned towards us. Frazaõ killed it with a charge of shot, shattering it completely, and destroying, to my regret, its value as a specimen.

We walked over moderately elevated and dry ground for about a mile, and then descended (three or four feet only) to the dry bed of another creek. This was pierced in the same way as the former watercourse, with round holes full of muddy water. They occurred at intervals of a few yards, and had the appearance

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of having been made by the hand of man. The smallest were about two feet, the largest seven or eight feet in diameter. As we approached the most extensive of the larger ones, I was startled at seeing a number of large, serpent-like heads bobbing above the surface. These proved to be those of electric eels, and it now occurred to me that the round holes were made by these animals working constantly round and round in the moist muddy soil. Their depth (some of them were at least eight feet deep) was doubtless due also to the movements of the eels in the soft soil, and accounted for their not drying up, in the fine season, with the rest of the creek. Thus, whilst alligators and turtles in this great inundated forest region retire to the larger pools during the dry season, the electric eels make for themselves little ponds in which to pass the season of drought.

My companions now cut a stout pole, and proceeded to eject the eels in order to get at the other fishes, with which they had discovered the ponds to abound. I amused them all very much by showing how the electric shock from the eels could pass from one person to another. We joined hands in a line whilst I touched the biggest and freshest of the animals on the head with the point of my hunting-knife. We found that this experiment did not succeed more than three times with the same eel when out of the water, for the fourth time the shock was scarcely perceptible.

Leaving the bed of the creek, we marched onwards, always towards the centre of the land, guided by the sun, which now glimmered through the thick foliage overhead. About eleven o'clock we saw a break in the forest before us, and presently emerged on the banks of a rather large sheet of water. At the further end of the lake lay a deep watercourse, which we traced for about half a mile, and found to communicate with another and smaller pool. This second

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one evidently swarmed with turtles, as we saw the snouts of many peering above the surface of the water

In recrossing the space between the two pools we heard the crash of monkeys in the crowns of trees overhead. José fired at length at one of the laggards of the troop, and wounded him. He climbed pretty nimbly towards a denser part of the tree, and a second and a third discharge failed to bring him down. The height from the ground to the bough on which he was perched could not have been less than 150 feet, and we could get a glimpse of him only by standing directly underneath, and straining our eyes upwards. We killed him at last by loading our best gun with a careful charge, and resting the barrel against the tree trunk to steady the aim.

It was about one o'clock in the afternoon when we again reached the spot where we had first struck the banks of the larger pool. We had hitherto had but poor sport, so after dining on the remains of our fried fish and farinha, and smoking our cigarettes, we made off in another direction through the forest to try to find better hunting-ground. On our fresh route we were obliged to cut our way through a long belt of bamboo underwood, and not being so careful of my steps as my companions, I trod repeatedly on the flinty thorns which had fallen from the bushes, finishing by becoming completely lame, one thorn having entered deeply the sole of my foot. I was obliged to be left behind; Lino, the Indian, remaining with me. The careful fellow cleaned my wound with his saliva, placed pieces of isca (the felt-like substance manufactured by ants) on them to staunch the blood, and bound my feet with tough bast to serve as shoes, which he cut from the bark of a Mongúba tree. He went about his work in a very gentle way and with much skill, but was so sparing of speech that I could

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scarcely get answers to the questions I put to him. When he had done, I was able to limp about pretty nimbly. We had to wait two hours for the return of our companions, during part of this time I was left quite alone, Lino having started off into the jungle after a peccary (a kind of wild hog) which had come near to where we sat, but on seeing us had given a grunt and bounded off into the thickets. At length our friends hove in sight, loaded with game, having shot twelve curassows and two cujubíms, a handsome black fowl with a white head. They had discovered a third pool containing plenty of turtles. Lino rejoined us at the same time, having missed the peccary, but in compensation shot a porcupine.

We now retraced our steps towards the water-side, a weary walk of five or six miles, reaching our canoe by half-past five o'clock, or a little before sunset. It was considered by every one in the encampment at Catuá that we had had an unusually good day's sport. I never knew any small party to take so much game in one day in these forests, over which animals are everywhere so widely and sparingly scattered. My companions were greatly elated, and on approaching Catuá made a great commotion with their paddles to announce their successful return, singing in their loudest key one of the wild choruses of the Amazonian boatmen.

H W BATES

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MIDDLETON had been a considerable traveller in out-of-the-way places, and he related to me in detail what I had already heard him tell, his experience in Morocco with a Moorish magician. This is his account of the incident.

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“ He was travelling in 1879 about half-way between Tetuan and Morocco, and one evening an old man came to his camp mounted on an ass, with a boy as servant. The man said he was a magician, and proposed to perform three wonders, the first to throw a ball of twine into the air, the second to make a plant grow, and the third to show the face of a person thought of, in a globe of ink. It was already late, and the performance was put off until the following morning—the magician remaining the night in the camp, and in the morning when the tents were struck he was invited to give his performance. It was an open place, uninhabited, and without trees or bushes. Middleton chose the ground at some little distance from where the camp had been. The magician first took from his wallet a large ball of string, large enough to need both hands to lift it, and having made a long incantation he tied the end of the string to one finger of his left hand, and then with a great exertion threw the ball upwards, which unravelled as it went, and, growing less and less, disappeared in the air. He then let go of the string's end, which continued to hang from the sky. The magician and his boy sat at a little distance, and Middleton went to the string and pulled it downwards, as you would pull a bell-rope. It stretched to within about two feet of the ground, but he felt the resistance strongly from above, so much so that he cut his fingers with the string, the mark remaining for several days afterwards. The five men whom he had with him also touched the string, three of these were Moors, one a Berber, and the other an interpreter. It was clear daylight at the time, about half an hour after sunrise. When they had all satisfied themselves that the string was suspended as it appeared to be, the magician came forward, and in his turn pulled it, when it fell down from the sky in coils on the ground; he then rolled

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it up again into a ball, and put it back into his wallet

“ The magician next took from his wallet a seed, and, when Middleton had chosen a bare place, planted it in the ground ; he then asked for some palm branches which they had with them, and which had been cut the day before, and he made an arched covering with them over the seed and heaped horse rugs upon the hoops, and then sat apart and made incantations. At the end of a few minutes he invited them to undo the covering, and there, in the ground, a plant was growing, set firmly in the earth, the first time a few inches high, but when he had covered it up again and built the hoops higher, it at last became three feet eight inches high Middleton measured the plant, found it firmly rooted, and cut off and kept some of the leaves , the nature of the plant seemed to resemble that of the Indian-rubber tree, and it had some fifty leaves. It was fresh and healthy though the weather was very hot, it being the month of October In the third incantation Middleton was made to look into a globe of ink. He desired to see the face of a friend, but instead saw persistently and very vividly a certain landscape he knew well on the river Severn, near Tewkesbury The magician, when asked whether he could climb the string and disappear in the air (like the magician Marco Polo tells of), stated that his grandfather had had the power, but that he himself was unable Having been rewarded, he mounted his ass and rode away Middleton believes that the manifestations produced were mesmeric, certainly no trick The leaves of the plant he kept for some time, but lost with other things in a shipwreck on his way home ”

WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT

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THE BURNOUS

My companion to-day was a characteristic seminomad boy of the poorest class ; an orphan, of course (they are nearly all orphans), and quite abandoned. His whole vocabulary could not have exceeded one hundred and fifty words , he had never heard of the Apostle or Allah or his sacred book , he could only run, and throw stones, and endure, like a beast, those ceaseless illnesses of which only death, an early death as a rule, is allowed to cure them. His clothing was an undershirt and the inevitable burnous, brown with dirt.

“ What have you done to-day ? ” I asked him

“ Nothing.”

“ And yesterday ? ”

“ Nothing. Why should I do anything ? ”

“ Don’t you *ever* wash ? ”

“ I have nobody to wash me ”

Yet they appreciate the use of unguents. The other day a man accidentally poured a glassful of oil into the dusty street. Within a moment a crowd of boys were gathered around, dabbling their hands into it and then rubbing them on their hair ; those that possessed boots began by ornamenting them, and thence conveyed the stuff to their heads—the ground was licked dry in a twinkling ; their faces glistened with the greasy mixture. “ That’s good,” they said.

Such, I dare say, were the pastimes of those prehistoric imps of the throwing-disks, and their clothing must have been much the same.

For what is the burnous save a glorified aboriginal beast-skin ? It has the same principle of construction , the major part covers the human back and sides ; the beast’s head forms the hood ; where the forefeet meet, the thing is tied together across the breast, leaving a

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large open slit below, and a smaller one above, where the man's head emerges

The character of the race is summed up in that hopeless garment, which unfits the wearer for every pleasure and every duty of modern life. An article of everyday clothing which prevents a man from using his upper limbs, which swathes them up, like a silkworm in its cocoon—can anything more insane be imagined? Wrapped therein for nearly all their lives, the whole race grows round-shouldered; the gastric region, which ought to be protected in this climate of extremes, is exposed, the heating of their heads, night and day, with its hood, cannot but injure their brains; their hands become weak as those of women, with claw-like movements of the fingers and an inability to open the palm to the full.

No wonder it takes ten Arabs to fight one negro; no wonder their spiritual life is apathetic, unfruitful, since the digits that explore and design, following up the vagrant fancies of the imagination, are practically atrophied. You will see beggars who find it too troublesome, on cold days, to extricate their hands for the purpose of demanding alms¹. Man has been described as a tool-making animal, but the burnous effectually counteracts that wholesome tendency; it is a mummifying vesture, or step in the direction of fossilification. Will the natives ever realise that the abolition of this sleeveless and buttonless anachronism is one of the conditions of their betterment? Have *they* made the burnous, or vice versa? No matter. They came together somehow, and suited one another.

The burnous is the epitome of Arab inefficiency.

They call it simple, and like other things that go by that name, it defeats its own objects of facilitating the common operations of life. It is amusing to watch them at their laundry-work. Unless a man stand

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still and upright, the end of this garment is continually slipping down from his shoulders , one of the washer-man's hands, therefore, is employed in holding it in its place , the other grasps a stick upon which he leans while stamping a war-dance with his feet upon the linen. This is only half the performance, for a friend, holding up *his* cloak with one hand, must bend over and ladle the necessary water upon the linen with the other. Thus two men are requisitioned to wash a shirt—a hand of one, two feet of the other. No wonder they do not wash them often , the undertaking, thanks to the burnous, is too complicated.

Yet there is no denying that it adds charm to the landscape , it is highly decorative , its colour and shape and peculiar texture are as pleasing to the beholder as must have been the toga of the old Romans (which, by the way, was a purely ceremonial covering, to be doffed during work : so Cincinnatus, when the senators found him at the plough, went in to dress in his toga ere receiving them).

Stalking along on their thin bare shanks, their glittering eyes and hooked noses shaded within its hood, many adult Arabs assume a strangely bird-like appearance , while the smooth-faced youths, peering from under its coquettish folds, remind one of third-rate actresses out for a spree. In motion, when some half-naked boy sits merrily upon a galloping stallion, his bare limbs and flying burnous take on the passionate grace of a panathenaic frieze , it befits equally well the repose of old age, crouching at some street-corner in hieratic immobility.

Yes, there is no denying that it looks artistic , the burnous is picturesque, like many antediluvian things. And of course, where nothing better can be procured, it will protect you from the cold and the stinging rays of the sun. But if a European wants a chill in the

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liver he need only wear one for a few days on end , raise the hood, and you will have a headache in ten minutes

Nevertheless I have bought one, and am wearing it at this very moment But not as the poorer Arabs do Beneath it there is a suit of ordinary winter clothing, as well as two English ulsters—and this *indoors* Perhaps this will give some idea of the cold of Gafsa There is no heating these bare rooms, with their icy walls and floorings out of doors a blizzard is raging that would flay a rhinoceros. And the wind of Gafsa has this peculiarity, that it is equally bitter from whichever point of the compass it blows. Let those who contemplate the supreme madness of coming to the sunny oasis at the present season of the year (January) bring not only Arctic vestment, eiderdowns, fur cloaks, carpets, and foot-warmers, but also, and chiefly, efficient furnaces and fuel for them

For such things seem to be unknown hereabouts

NORMAN DOUGLAS

McEWEN AND THE EAGLE

DAYLIGHT had hardly dawned when McEwen, the shepherd, topped the ridge and found the old ewe lying dead in the peat-hag, a newly born lamb beside her So he was glad that he was astir with the first morning light, for assuredly the birds of prey or the foxes would have killed the lamb within an hour or so had it been left.

McEwen was bound over the hill to visit a neighbour, so, taking a piece of twine from his pocket, he bound the lamb's legs fore and aft, then placed it under a boulder where it would lie dry and screened from view till he returned from his message. Finally

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he filled in the crevice with tough ling plants, going his way satisfied that the birds could not get at it, and that the foxes, fearing a trap, would not try.

Thirty minutes later McEwen, gathering his plaid about him as he met the snowblast from the heights, topped the last ridge, and ahead opened out a wonderful corrie with the white and jagged peaks on either side towering into the cloud banks, while the ravine extended ahead in a miniature Grand Canyon. His course lay down the corrie and into the next glen, but he had not gone far when a grouse came rattling by, flying fast and low, then another and another, then grouse in packs and strings for a period of three minutes or more.

The shepherd knew the sign well enough, and it was not very long ere he saw "his majesty" gliding slowly up the corrie towards him. Yes, there he was, recognisable from afar as he hung in the wind with never a movement of his great wings—now low over the heather with wings almost vertical, then wafting up, up, till he seemed to be level with the topmost peaks. The eagle came steadily on, passing over the man's head at an altitude of 200 feet or so, and the shepherd could see distinctly his extended flight feathers, could see even his bright but cruel eyes as he turned his royal head this way and that in alert watchfulness.

"Yes, you devil!" muttered McEwen viciously. "I'll get you yet if you come this way too often!" And as the eagle vanished over the ridge, flashing like a beautiful golden thing as the sunlight caught it, the shepherd was more than ever glad that he had found the motherless lamb.

Two hours later McEwen returned and went straight to the place where his orphan charge was hidden. As he neared the crag he saw the eagle rise from the heather, but concluded that it had been

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feasting on the dead ewe. Then he uttered a bitter oath when he found the lamb dragged out and partly devoured, while an eagle's feather in the ling furnished the condemning proof, if any proof were needed.

Well acquainted with eagles and the like as McEwen was, he could not make out how this one, flying high overhead, had found the hidden lamb, or, having found it, how the bird had dragged it out. That, however, was beside the point. McEwen possessed a deeply rooted hatred of eagles, inherited from a long line of shepherd forefathers, and it mattered not to him that the tenant of the great estate wished the royal birds to be preserved, nor that they came under the schedule of protected birds.

The shepherd went back to his shieling and returned a little while later with a spade. He left the dead lamb and the ewe just as they were, but on the downwind side he dug a hole in the peat deep enough to hide in; also he placed a bundle of ling beside the hole, so that, when in, he could cover or rather camouflage his head and shoulders.

On the morn's morning McEwen was up before the day's breaking, and making his way towards his hiding. The moor is a strange place as the darkness begins to lift in the early spring, and there were voices everywhere. Hither and thither the red grouse flew, and the sharp "go back, go back" of the male birds filled the air, while occasionally there came in answer the deep rumbling notes of the hen birds creeping in the ling. Somewhere a redshank was calling, and a mountain blackbird opened up its sad, sweet song as the man left the rough pasturage behind him.

The hole was half filled with cold water, but that did not trouble McEwen unduly, so intent was he in purpose. With him he had an old muzzle-loader, heavily charged with shot and slugs, and now its

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deadly muzzle looked out from the hole under the crude roof of his hiding

While there was still no light to speak of, a couple of ravens came along and began to feast on the carcass of the ewe. McEwen could just see them as one then the other occasionally popped up against the star-spangled sky. Presently a third raven arrived and asked permission to join the two already present. With much bowing and scraping he was admitted to the feast, and by the time the east had brightened perceptibly, it seemed to McEwen that a whole flock of ravens was feasting on the carcass. He had no special use for these birds, but he heeded them not, for to-day he was after nobler quarry.

It was now just light enough to see each individual bird, when suddenly one of them uttered a warning croak, and with a rush of wings they all made off, flying in different directions over the dark slopes. A stag and a parcel of hinds moved like ghosts on the windward side, but in a moment they too were gone, and for perhaps a minute there was silence. Then suddenly there came a sighing overhead, growing, fading, then a mighty swish of wings as Milord came down and settled upon the carcass of the lamb.

Man is born a hunter, and McEwen felt a thrill of triumph as he saw his prize before him. Yet, even to him, scion of an ancient feud, there came a sense of admiration as the royal bird slowly folded its wings, looking quickly around with eyes which seemed to pierce like needle points of light.

Slowly, carefully, McEwen levelled the old gun. Many a kingly life of the hills had it already shattered out, and one more did not matter. McEwen left nothing to chance. He aimed low to allow for the kick of the heavy charge, and he fired. The eagle was thrown backwards by the mass of lead, and for

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a moment there it sat, its great wings with their wonderful history far outspread, its amber eyes fixed upon McEwen with an expression of savage and resentful reproach

Away in the east the red rim of the sun appeared above the ridges. Its light caught the heights above, transforming the snow-fields into floods of scarlet. Down from the peaks it gushed in living cascades, deepening into the gloom of mauve and purple—like the life-blood of Kings, for every peak was crowned with gold and set with a thousand jewels. Thus all around the Goddess of the Dawn lit up her fairy lanterns, and a hundred snow-draped heights floated like palaces of the air in a world of deepest shadow.

But the colour faded even with the echoes, even as the light faded from those amber eyes, and something arrested McEwen's hand as he raised the rusty barrels to strike the *coup de grace*. For there was no need to strike the blow

A moment McEwen stood over the dead eagle, then from the immeasurable heights above he heard a short sharp bark, but even as his gaze rested on the sailing atom in a rift between the clouds it vanished from his view. Yet McEwen knew that he had heard a sound which is among the rarest in all Wild Nature—a sound that he had never heard before, and would never hear again—the call note of a golden eagle

Later in the day the shepherd tumbled a sack over the keeper's garden wall while the latter was pricking out his seedlings. McEwen nodded, the keeper nodded, then the shepherd went his way.

H. MORTIMER BATTEN

FACT AND FICTION

BULL-FIGHTING

THE most common, and to me the most interesting, thing that passes in the bull's brain is the development of querencias. A querencia is a place the bull naturally wants to go to in the ring, a preferred locality. That is a natural querencia and such are well known and fixed, but an accidental querencia is more than that. It is a place which develops in the course of the fight where the bull makes his home. It does not usually show at once, but develops in his brain as the fight goes on. In this place he feels that he has his back against the wall, and in his querencia he is inestimably more dangerous and almost impossible to kill. If a bull-fighter goes in to kill a bull in his querencia, rather than to bring him out of it, he is almost certain to be gored. The reason for this is that the bull, when he is in querencia, is altogether on the defensive, his horn stroke is a riposte rather than an attack, a counter rather than a lead, and the speed of eye and stroke being equal, the riposte will always beat the attack, since it sees the attack coming and parries or beats it to the touch. The attacker must lay himself open and the counter is certain to arrive if it is as fast as the attack, since it has the opening before it while the attack must try to create that opening. In boxing, Gene Tunney was an example of a counter-puncher; all those boxers who have lasted longest and taken least punishment have been counter-punchers too. The bull, when he is in querencia, counters the sword stroke with his horn when he sees it coming as the boxer counters a lead, and many men have paid with their lives, or with bad wounds, because they did not bring the bull out of his querencia before they went in to kill.

BULL-FIGHTING

The natural querencias of all bulls are the door of the passage-way through which they entered the ring and the wall of the barrera. The first because it is familiar to them ; it is the last place they remember , and the second because it gives them something to get their back against, so they feel safe from attack in the rear. These are the known querencias and a bull-fighter utilises them in many ways. He knows that a bull, at the conclusion of a pass or a series of passes, will probably have a tendency to make for the natural querencia and in so doing will pay little or no attention to what is in his way. A bull-fighter can, therefore, place a prepared and very statuesque pass as the bull goes by him on the way to his refuge. Such passes can be very brilliant , the man standing firm, his feet together, seemingly giving no importance to the bull's charge, letting the whole bulk of the bull rush by him without making the slightest movement of retreat, the horns sometimes passing only a fraction of an inch from his chest ; but to the person who knows bull-fighting they are valueless except as tricks. They seem dangerous but they are not, for the bull is really intent on reaching his querencia and the man has only placed himself beside his path. It is the bull that controls the direction, speed, and aim, therefore to the real lover of bull-fighting it is valueless since in real bull-fighting, not circus bull-fighting, the man should force the bull to charge as he wants him to ; should make him curve rather than go straight, should control his direction, not merely profit by his charges to posture as the bull goes by. The Spaniards say, *torear es parar, templar y mandar*. That is, in real bull-fighting the matador should remain still, should measure the speed of the bull by the movement of his wrists and arms holding the cloth, and should dominate and direct the bull's course. Any other

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way of fighting, such as making statuesque passes in the direction of the bull's natural voyage, no matter how brilliant, is not true bull-fighting, since it is the animal that is dominating, not the man

A bull's accidental querencias that come up in his brain during the fight may be, and most often are, the places where he has had some success ; killed a horse, for example That is the most common querencia of a brave bull, although another very usual one on a hot day is any place on the sand of the ring where it has been dampened and cooled, often the mouth of the underground pipe to which a hose is screwed on during the intermission to be used in laying the dust of the arena ; where the sand feels cool under the bull's hooves The bull, too, may take up his querencia in a place where a horse has been killed in a previous fight, where he smells the blood , a place where he has tossed a bull-fighter, or any part of the ring for no apparent reason at all ; simply because he feels at home there You can see the idea of the querencia establishing itself in his brain during the course of the fight He will go first tentatively, then with more purpose, and finally, unless the bull-fighter has noticed his tendency and deliberately kept him away from his chosen spot, the bull will go to his querencia constantly, will take his place there with his back or his flank to the barrier and will refuse to leave It is then that the bull-fighters sweat the big drop The bull must be brought out ; but he is gone completely on the defensive and will not respond to the cape and will cut at them with his horns, refusing altogether to charge. The only way to get him out is to get so close to him that he is absolutely sure he can get the man, and with short pulling jerks of the cape, or by dropping the cape under his muzzle on the ground and pulling it a little at a time, tempt him a few steps at a time, from

SFAX

his querencia. There is nothing pretty about it, it is only dangerous, and usually, the fifteen minutes allotted the matador for killing the bull are passing steadily, he is getting angrier each minute, the banderilleros working more dangerously and the bull becoming more entrenched. But if the matador, impatient, finally says, "All right, if he wants to die there let him die there," and goes in to kill, that will probably be the last thing he will remember until he comes down out of the air with or without a horn wound. For the bull will watch him as he comes in, will knock up the muleta and sword, and will catch the man every time.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

SFAX

I FOUND a city wall, a huge battlement, ancient and weathered, like an unscalable cliff, and going through its gate was entering the shadows of a cave. Out of the glare of the sun I went into the gloom of deep, narrow, and mysterious passages. The sun was only on the parapets and casements, which leaned towards each other confidentially, and left only a ragged line of light above. These alley-ways were crowded with camels, asses, and strange men. An understanding and sneering camel in a narrow passage will force you to take what chance there is of escape in desecrating a mosque, while Moslems watch you as the only Christian there, or of going under its slobbering mouth and splay feet. It does not care which

It was market-day in Sfax. There were little piles of vivid fruit beside white walls where a broad ray of sunlight found them. There were silversmiths at work, tent-makers, and the makers of camel harness.

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The tanners had laid skins for us to walk over. There were exotic smells. I went exploring the crooked turnings with an indifference which was studied. I was getting an interesting time, but was distinctly conscious of eyes, a ceaseless stream of eyes that floated by, watchful though making no sign. Several times I found myself jostled with some roughness. It occurred to me that I had heard on the ship that Sfax was the only town which had offered resistance to the French, its men have a fine reputation throughout Tunisia, which they do something now and then to maintain, in consequence. They certainly appeared a sturdy and virile lot. They were not listless, like the Arabs of Algeria, who have nothing to show for themselves but the haughty and aloof bearing of the proud but beaten.

Having discovered that the enemy was vulnerable though strong, the men of Sfax go through the day now with the directed activity of those who once had got the worst of it, but have a hope of doing better next time. They gave me a lively and adventurous scene. They moved with silent and stealthy quickness. Their eyes glanced sideways from under their cowls. Their hands were hidden under their jubbahs. A few of them stared with the hate of the bereft. It is not possible to face everybody in a press which moves in all directions, and I was the only European who was there.

Passing a mosque, where I noticed the Moslems had attempted, but had not completed, the obliteration of some representations of birds—so the mosque was once, evidently, a place where other gods had been worshipped—I hesitated, wishful to look closer into this curiosity, but recollected myself, and was passing on. An Arab in the turban of one who had been to Mecca was squatting cross-legged on the old marble pavement outside the mosque, and I just took

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in that he was a fine venerable fellow with an important beard, with a look of wisdom and experience in his steady glance from under the strong arches of his eyebrows that made me wish I knew Arabic, and could squat beside him, and gossip of the wide world. As I turned he said quietly, "Good-day !"

Now I thought perhaps I was bewitched, but turned and looked at him "How are you ?" he asked At that moment, when his eyes looking upward had a smile of understanding mischief, and in such an alien city as Sfax, I was prepared to declare there is but one God, and Mahomet is His prophet For that sort of thing comes easy to me ; and would have been quite true, as far as it went. Then I went back to him, and fearing that after all I might be addressing but the parrot which had already exhausted its vocabulary, I tried it on him - "Shall I take my boots off here, father, or may I sit down with you ?"

"Sit down," he said.

He was a man of medicine He sold there prophylactics against small-pox, ill-luck, blindness, the evil eye, sterility, or any other trouble you thought threatened you . He invited me to inspect his display of amulets and fetushes, coloured glass tablets with Arabic inscriptions, and a deal of stuff which looked unreasonable to me, articles the holy man either could not or would not resolve into sense

His English, which he had learned as a shipping agent for the pilgrim traffic, soon reached its narrow limits, to my sorrow When it left common objects and we wished to compare our world (for there is no doubt he was an experienced and understanding elder who knew to within a little what he might expect of his God and of his fellows), we were left smiling at each other, and had to guess the rest Yet at least the bazaar could witness this good Moslem of age and admitted wisdom sitting opposite a dubious

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Christian in a companionable manner ; and there was that testimony to my advantage. They even watched him draw his finger across his throat in serious and energetic pantomime, and saw me nod in grave appreciation, when he was trying to make me understand what was his sympathy for the Christian conquerors of Sfax.

I went outside the landward gate of the city, and looked out over the level of brilliant sand which stretched out from there to Lake Tchad. What a voyage ! What a lure ! Perhaps there is no more perilous journey on earth than that, and if a traveller would vanish into the past, into such Oriental countries as the voyagers of Hakluyt saw with wonder, then to leave Sfax, and go across country to the Niger, would equal what once came of fooling with the arcana of the Djinn. Though, after all, one would like to emerge again, to tell the tale to the children ; and the whole dubiety of it is in that last difficulty. It is almost certain the magic would be too powerful.

About the bright yellow sea of the desert which came up to the high cliffs of the town, the squatting camels made dark hummocks. Strings of donkeys converged on the city gate bearing water-pots and baskets of charcoal. Sometimes a line of camels swayed outwards through the crowd, disappeared among the shrines, going south. Watching such a caravan go was the same as watching a ship leave port.

Uncertain, and not a little nervous, I wandered among some plantations of olives and false peppers, where the domes of the tombs floated like white bubbles on the foliage. Here an Arab beckoned to me, and told me he had been watching me for some time—for he was an English medical missionary in disguise—and warned me that these gardens and shrines were quite the wrong place to wander in.

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alone It appears that only a few days before the flame of insurrection flashed down the bazaar, licked up a few French soldiers who happened to be there, and had almost got a hold before the garrison appeared and doused it He took me to his house, with its windows heavily barred, for there his predecessor had been murdered (If this could happen at the starting-place for Lake Tchad, then let the idea go)

From the flat roof of the doctor's house I smelt the dung of ages, fought with legions of flies, and looked down on a large quadrangle of hay and stable muck, where camels had carefully folded themselves on the ground, and chewed reflectively, their eyes half closed, and large drowsy asses mechanically fanned their ears at the loathly swarms.

The missionary surmised that the caravanseraï below was the perfect reflection of one we had heard more about, which once was at Bethlehem The square was enclosed with flat-roofed stables; and it being a busy time, they were all occupied The first one, immediately below us, was filled with a family of Kabyles, which consisted chiefly of a magnificent virago of a wife, tattooed, with a big gold ring in her nostrils, who seemed to have a trying life with her mild and contemplative old husband She had more children than one could count without giving the matter that close attention which might be misinterpreted She cradled them in the manger every night. Loud as her voice was, though, I could almost hear the old man smile as he walked away from her. They had two contemptuous camels who never lifted an eyelid when she raised her voice to them, but chewed calmly on, with faces turned impassively towards the New Jerusalem of camels, where viragoes are not; and several resigned asses who appeared to have handed their souls back to their Maker,

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because souls are but extra trammels in this place of sorrow

Next door to them was a regular tenant who bred goats, and fed them out of British biscuit-tins. Beyond them the stable was occupied by a party of swarthy ruffians who had arrived with a cargo of esparto grass. In the far corner, a family, crowded out, had been living for weeks under a structure of horrible rags. Smoke, issuing from a dozen seams, gave their home the look of a smouldering haystack.

H. M. TOMLINSON

WIT AND HUMOUR

WHANG THE MILLER

WHANG, the miller, was naturally avaricious, nobody loved money better than he, or more respected those that had it. When people would talk of a rich man in company, Whang would say, I know him very well, he and I have been long acquainted, he and I are intimate; he stood for a child of mine. but if ever a poor man was mentioned, he had not the least knowledge of the man, he might be very well for aught he knew, but he was not fond of many acquaintances, and loved to choose his company.

Whang, however, with all his eagerness for riches, was in reality poor; he had nothing but the profits of his mill to support him, but though these were small they were certain. while his mill stood and went, he was sure of eating, and his frugality was such, that he every day laid some money by, which he would at intervals count and contemplate with much satisfaction. Yet still his acquisitions were not equal to his desires, he only found himself above want, whereas he desired to be possessed of affluence.

One day, as he was indulging these wishes, he was informed that a neighbour of his had found a pan of money under ground, having dreamed of it three nights running before. These tidings were daggers to the heart of poor Whang. "Here am I," says he, "toiling and moiling from morning till night for a few paltry farthings, while neighbour Hunks only goes quietly to bed, and dreams himself into thousands before morning. Oh that I could dream like him!"

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With what pleasure would I dig round the pan ; how shily would I carry it home , not even my wife should see me , and then, oh, the pleasure of thrusting one's hand into a heap of gold up to the elbow ! ”

Such reflections only served to make the miller unhappy , he discontinued his former assiduity ; he was quite disgusted with small gains, and his customers began to forsake him . Every day he repeated the wish, and every night laid himself down in order to dream . Fortune, that was for a long time unkind, at last, however, seemed to smile upon his distresses, and indulged him with the wished-for vision . He dreamed, that under a certain part of the foundation of his mill there was concealed a monstrous pan of gold and diamonds, buried deep in the ground, and covered with a large flat stone . He rose up, thanked the stars that were at last pleased to take pity on his sufferings, and concealed his good luck from every person, as is usual in money dreams, in order to have the vision repeated the two succeeding nights, by which he should be certain of its veracity . His wishes in this also were answered ; he still dreamed of the same pan of money, in the very same place .

Now, therefore, it was past a doubt ; so, getting up early the third morning, he repaired alone, with a mattock in his hand, to the mill, and began to undermine that part of the wall which the vision directed . The first omen of success that he met was a broken mug ; digging still deeper, he turns up a house tile, quite new and entire . At last, after much digging, he came to the broad flat stone, but then so large, that it was beyond one man's strength to remove it . “ Here,” cried he, in raptures, to himself, “ here it is ! under this stone there is room for a very large pan of diamonds indeed ! I must e'en go home to my wife, and tell her the whole affair, and get her to assist me in turning it up ” . Away therefore he goes,

HANDY ANDY

and acquaints his wife with every circumstance of their good fortune. Her raptures on this occasion may easily be imagined ; she flew round his neck, and embraced him in an agony of joy . but those transports, however, did not delay their eagerness to know the exact sum ; returning, therefore, speedily together to the place where Whang had been digging, there they found—not indeed the expected treasure, but the mill, their only support, undermined and fallen.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

HANDY ANDY

ANDY ROONEY was a fellow who had the most singularly ingenious knack of doing everything the wrong way , disappointment waited on all affairs in which he bore a part, and destruction was at his fingers' ends ; so the nickname the neighbours stuck upon him was Handy Andy.

When Andy grew up to be what in country parlance is called “ a brave lump of a boy,” his mother thought he was old enough to do something for himself ; so she took him one day along with her to the squire's, and waited outside the door, loitering up and down the yard behind the house, among a crowd of beggars and great lazy dogs, that were thrusting their heads into every iron pot that stood outside the kitchen door, until chance might give her “ a sight o' the squire afore he wint out, or afore he wint in ” , and after spending her entire day in this idle way, at last the squire made his appearance, and Judy presented her son, who kept scraping his foot, and pulling his forelock, that stuck out like a piece of ragged thatch from his forehead, making his obeisance to the squire, while his mother was sounding his praises for being the

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"handiest craythur alive—and so willin'—nothin' comes wrong to him "

" I suppose the English of all this is, you want me to take him ? " said the squire.

" Throth, an' your honour, that's just it—if your honour would be plazed."

" What can he do ? "

" Anything, your honour "

" That means *nothing*, I suppose," said the squire.

" Oh, no, sir. Everything, I mane, that you would desire him to do "

To every one of these assurances on his mother's part Andy made a bow and a scrape

" Can he take care of horses ? "

" The best of care, sir," said the mother , while the miller, who was standing behind the squire, waiting for orders, made a grimace at Andy, who was obliged to cram his face into his hat to hide the laugh, which he could hardly smother from being heard, as well as seen

" Let him come, then, and help in the stables, and we'll see what we can do "

" May the Lord——"

" That'll do—there, now go."

" Oh, sure, but I'll pray for you, and——"

" Will you go ? "

" And may the angels make your honour's bed this blessed night, I pray."

" If you don't go, your son shan't come."

Judy and her hopeful boy turned to the right-about in double-quick time, and hurried down the avenue.

The next day Andy was duly installed into his office of stable helper ; and, as he was a good rider, he was soon made whipper-in to the hounds, for there was a want of such a functionary in the establishment , and Andy's boldness in this capacity soon made him a favourite with the squire, who was one of those

HANDY ANDY

rollicking boys on the pattern of the old school, who scorned the attentions of a regular valet, and let anyone that chance threw in his way bring him his boots, or his hot water for shaving, or his coat, whenever it *was* brushed. One morning, Andy, who was very often the attendant on such occasions, came to his room with hot water. He tapped at the door.

"Who's that?" said the squire, who had just risen, and did not know but it might be one of the women servants.

"It's me, sir."

"Oh—Andy! Come in."

"Here's the hot water, sir," said Andy, bearing an enormous tin can.

"Why, what on earth brings that enormous tin can here? You might as well bring the stable bucket."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Andy, retreating. In two minutes more Andy came back, and tapping at the door, put in his head cautiously, and said, "The maids in the kitchen, your honour, says there's not so much hot water ready."

"Did I not see it a moment since in your hand?"

"Yes, sir, but that's not nigh the full o' the stable bucket."

"Go along, you stupid thief! and get me some hot water directly."

"Will the can do, sir?"

"Ay, anything, so you make haste."

Off posted Andy, and back he came with the can.

"Where'll I put it, sir?"

"Throw this out," said the squire, handing Andy a jug containing some cold water, meaning the jug to be replenished with the hot.

Andy took the jug, and the window of the room being open, he very deliberately threw the jug out. The squire stared with wonder, and at last said:

"What did you do that for?"

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“ Sure you *towld* me to throw it out, sir ”

“ Go out of this, you thick-headed villain ! ” said the squire, throwing his boots at Andy’s head, along with some very neat curses Andy retreated, and thought himself a very ill-used person

SAMUEL LOVER

THE STUFFED TROUT

If ever you have an evening to spare, up the river, I should advise you to drop into one of the little village inns, and take a seat in the tap-room You will be nearly sure to meet one or two old rod-men, sipping their toddy there, and they will tell you enough fishy stories in half an hour to give you indigestion for a month.

George and I—I don’t know what had become of Harris , he had gone out and had a shave, early in the afternoon, and had then come back and spent full forty minutes in pipe-claying his shoes, we had not seen him since—George and I, therefore, and the dog, left to ourselves, went for a walk to Wallingford on the second evening, and, coming home, we called in at a little river-side inn, for a rest, and other things.

We went into the parlour and sat down There was an old fellow there, smoking a long clay pipe, and we naturally began chatting

He told us that it had been a fine day to-day, and we told him that it had been a fine day yesterday, and then we all told each other that we thought it would be a fine day to-morrow ; and George said the crops seemed to be coming up nicely

After that it came out, somehow or other, that we were strangers in the neighbourhood, and that we were going away the next morning

Then a pause ensued in the conversation, during

THE STUFFED TROUT

which our eyes wandered round the room. They finally rested upon a dusty old glass-case, fixed very high up above the chimney-piece, and containing a trout. It rather fascinated me, that trout, it was such a monstrous fish. In fact, at first glance, I thought it was a cod.

"Ah!" said the old gentleman, following the direction of my gaze, "fine fellow that, ain't he?"

"Quite uncommon," I murmured, and George asked the old man how much he thought it weighed.

"Eighteen pounds six ounces," said our friend, rising and taking down his coat. "Yes," he continued, "it wur sixteen years ago, come the third o' next month, that I landed him. I caught him just below the bridge with a minnow. They told me he wur in the river, and I said I'd have him, and so I did. You don't see many fish that size about here now, I'm thinking. Good-night, gentlemen, good-night."

And out he went, and left us alone.

We could not take our eyes off the fish after that. It really was a remarkably fine fish. We were still looking at it, when the local carrier, who had just stopped at the inn, came to the door of the room with a pot of beer in his hand, and he also looked at the fish.

"Good-sized trout, that," said George, turning round to him.

"Ah! you may well say that, sir," replied the man, and then, after a pull at his beer, he added, "Maybe you wasn't here, sir, when that fish was caught?"

"No," we told him. We were strangers in the neighbourhood.

"Ah!" said the carrier, "then of course, how should you? It was nearly five years ago that I caught that trout."

"Oh! was it you who caught it, then?" said I.

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“ Yes, sir,” replied the genial old fellow. “ I caught him just below the lock—leastways, what was the lock then—one Friday afternoon, and the remarkable thing about it is that I caught him with a fly. I’d gone out pike-fishing, bless you, never thinking of a trout, and when I saw that whopper on the end of my line, blest if it didn’t quite take me aback. Well, you see, he weighed twenty-six pound. Good-night, gentlemen, good-night ”

Five minutes afterwards, a third man came in, and described how *he* had caught it early one morning, with bleak, and then he left, and a stolid, solemn-looking, middle-aged individual came in, and sat down over by the window.

None of us spoke for a while, but, at length, George turned to the new-comer, and said :

“ I beg your pardon, I hope you will forgive the liberty that we—perfect strangers in the neighbourhood—are taking, but my friend here and myself would be so much obliged if you would tell us how you caught that trout up there ”

“ Why, who told you I caught that trout ? ” was the surprised query.

We said that nobody had told us so, but somehow or other we felt instinctively that it was he who had done it

“ Well, it’s a most remarkable thing—most remarkable,” answered the stolid stranger, laughing ; “ because, as a matter of fact, you are quite right, I did catch it. But fancy your guessing it like that. Dear me, it’s really a most remarkable thing ”

And then he went on, and told us how it had taken him half an hour to land it, and how it had broken his rod. He said he had weighed it carefully when he reached home, and it had turned the scale at thirty-four pounds

He went in his turn, and when he was gone, the

THE STUFFED TROUT

landlord came in to us. We told him the various histories we had heard about his trout, and he was immensely amused, and we all laughed very heartily.

"Fancy Jim Bates and Joe Muggles and Mr. Jones and old Billy Maunders all telling you that they had caught it. Ha ' ha ' ha ' Well, that is good," said the honest old fellow, laughing heartily. "Yes, they are the sort to give it *me*, to put up in *my* parlour, if *they* had caught it, they are ' Ha ' ha ' ha ' "

And then he told us the real history of the fish. It seemed that he had caught it himself, years ago, when he was quite a lad, not by any art or skill, but by that unaccountable luck that appears to always wait upon a boy when he plays the wag from school, and goes out fishing on a sunny afternoon, with a bit of string tied on to the end of a tree.

He said that bringing home that trout had saved him from a whacking, and that even his schoolmaster had said it was worth the rule of three and practice put together.

He was called out of the room at this point, and George and I again turned our gaze upon the fish.

It really was a most astonishing trout. The more we looked at it, the more we marvelled at it.

It excited George so much that he climbed up on the back of a chair to get a better view of it.

And then the chair slipped, and George clutched wildly at the trout-case to save himself, and down it came with a crash, George and the chair on top of it.

"You haven't injured the fish, have you?" I cried in alarm, rushing up.

"I hope not," said George, rising cautiously and looking about.

But he had. The trout lay shattered into a thousand fragments—I say a thousand, but they may have only been nine hundred. I did not count them.

We thought it strange and unaccountable that a

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stuffed trout should break up into little pieces like that.

And so it would have been strange and unaccountable, if it had been a stuffed trout, but it was not

That trout was plaster of Paris

JEROME K. JEROME

A STRANGE STORY

IN the northern part of Austin there once dwelt an honest family by the name of Smothers. The family consisted of John Smothers, his wife, himself, their little daughter, five years of age, and her parents, making six people toward the population of the city when counted for a special write-up, but only three by actual count.

One night after supper the little girl was seized with a severe colic, and John Smothers hurried down town to get some medicine.

He never came back.

The little girl recovered and in time grew up to womanhood.

The mother grieved very much over her husband's disappearance, and it was nearly three months before she married again, and moved to San Antonio.

The little girl also married in time, and after a few years had rolled around, she also had a little girl five years of age.

She still lived in the same house where they dwelt when her father had left home and never returned.

One night by a remarkable coincidence her little girl was taken with cramp colic on the anniversary of the disappearance of John Smothers, who would now have been her grandfather if he had been alive and had a steady job.

"I will go down town and get some medicine for

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her," said John Smith (for it was none other than he whom she had married).

"No, no, dear John," cried his wife. "You, too, might disappear for ever, and then forget to come back."

So John Smith did not go, and together they sat by the bedside of little Pansy (for that was Pansy's name).

After a little Pansy seemed to grow worse, and John Smith again attempted to go for medicine, but his wife would not let him.

Suddenly the door opened, and an old man, stooped and bent, with long white hair, entered the room.

"Hello, here is grandpa," said Pansy. She had recognised him before any of the others.

The old man drew a bottle of medicine from his pocket and gave Pansy a spoonful.

She got well immediately.

"I was a little late," said John Smothers, "as I waited for a street car."

O HENRY

THE BURGLARS

It was much too fine a night to think of going to bed at once, and so, although the witching hour of 9 P. M. had struck, Edward and I were still leaning out of the open window in our nightshirts, watching the play of the cedar-branch shadows on the moonlit lawn, and planning schemes of fresh devilry for the sunshiny morrow. From below, strains of the jocund piano declared that the Olympians were enjoying themselves in their listless, impotent way; for the new curate had been bidden to dinner that night, and was at the moment unclerically proclaiming to all the

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world that he feared no foe His discordant vociferations doubtless started a train of thought in Edward's mind, for he presently remarked, *à propos* of nothing whatever that had been said before, "I believe the new curate's rather gone on Aunt Maria."

I scouted the notion. "Why, she's quite old," I said (She must have seen some five-and-twenty summers)

"Of course she is," replied Edward scornfully. "It's not her, it's her money he's after, you bet!"

"Didn't know she had any money," I observed timidly

"Sure to have," said my brother with confidence—"heaps and heaps"

Silence ensued, both our minds being busy with the new situation thus presented mine in wonderment at this flaw that so often declared itself in enviable natures of fullest endowment—in a grown-up man and a good cricketer, for instance, even as this curate; Edward's (apparently) in the consideration of how such a state of things, supposing it existed, could be best turned to his own advantage

"Bobby Ferris told me," began Edward, in due course, "that there was a fellow spooning his sister once——"

"What's spooning?" I asked meekly

"Oh, I dunno," said Edward indifferently. "It's—it's—it's just a thing they do, you know. And he used to carry notes and messages and things between 'em, and he got a shilling almost every time"

"What, from each of 'em?" I innocently inquired.

Edward looked at me with scornful pity. "Girls never have any money," he briefly explained "But she did his exercises and got him out of rows, and told stories for him when he needed it—and much better ones than he could have made up for himself. Girls are useful in some ways. So he was living in clover,

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when unfortunately they went and quarrelled about something ”

“ Don’t see what that’s got to do with it,” I said

“ Nor don’t I,” rejoined Edward “ But anyhow the notes and things stopped, and so did the shillings Bobby was fairly cornered, for he had bought two ferrets on tick, and promised to pay a shilling a week, thinking the shillings were going on for ever, the silly young ass. So when the week was up and he was being dunned for the shilling, he went off to the fellow and said - ‘ Your broken-hearted Bella implores you to meet her at sundown By the hollow oak, as of old, be it only for a moment Do not fail ! ’ He got all that out of some rotten book, of course. The fellow looked puzzled, and said—

“ ‘ What hollow oak ? I don’t know any hollow oak.’

“ ‘ Perhaps it was the *Royal Oak* ? ’ said Bobby promptly, ’cos he saw he had made a slip through trusting too much to the rotten book , but this didn’t seem to make the fellow any happier ”

“ Should think not,” I said , “ the *Royal Oak*’s an awful low sort of pub ”

“ I know,” said Edward “ Well, at last the fellow said, ‘ I think I know what she means the hollow tree in your father’s paddock It happens to be an elm, but she wouldn’t know the difference All right , say I’ll be there ’ Bobby hung about a bit, for he hadn’t got his money. ‘ She was crying awfully,’ he said Then he got his shilling ”

“ And wasn’t the fellow riled,” I inquired, “ when he got to the place and found nothing ? ”

“ He found Bobby,” said Edward indignantly. “ Young Ferris was a gentleman, every inch of him He brought the fellow another message from Bella ‘ I dare not leave the house My cruel parents immure me closely. If you only knew what I suffer !

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—Your broken-hearted Bella ' Out of the same rotten book This made the fellow a little suspicious, 'cos it was the old Ferrises who had been keen about the thing all through. The fellow, you see, had tin."

" But what's that got to——" I began again.

" Oh, *I dunno*," said Edward impatiently. " I'm telling you just what Bobby told me. He got suspicious, anyhow, but he couldn't exactly call Bella's brother a liar, so Bobby escaped for the time. But when he was in a hole next week, over a stiff French exercise, and tried the same sort of game on his sister, she was too sharp for him, and he got caught out. Somehow women seem more mistrustful than men. They're so beastly suspicious by nature, you know "

" *I know*," said I " But did the two—the fellow and the sister—make it up afterwards ? "

" I don't remember about that," replied Edward indifferently , " but Bobby got packed off to school a whole year earlier than his people meant to send him. Which was just what he wanted. So you see it all came right in the end ! "

I was trying to puzzle out the moral of this story—it was evidently meant to contain one somewhere—when a flood of golden lamplight mingled with the moon-rays on the lawn, and Aunt Maria and the new curate strolled out on the grass below us, and took the direction of a garden-seat which was backed by a dense laurel shrubbery reaching round in a half-circle to the house. Edward meditated moodily " If we only knew what they were talking about," said he, " you'd soon see whether I was right or not. Look here ! Let's send the kid down by the porch to reconnoitre ! "

" Harold's asleep," I said , " it seems rather a shame——"

" Oh, rot ! " said my brother ; " he's the youngest, and he's got to do as he's told ! "

THE BURGLARS

So the luckless Harold was hauled out of bed and given his sailing orders. He was naturally rather vexed at being stood up suddenly on the cold floor, and the job had no particular interest for him, but he was both staunch and well-disciplined. The means of exit were simple enough. A porch of iron trellis came up to within easy reach of the window, and was habitually used by all three of us when modestly anxious to avoid public notice. Harold climbed deftly down the porch like a white rat, and his night-gown glimmered a moment on the gravel walk ere he was lost to sight in the darkness of the shrubbery. A brief interval of silence ensued, broken suddenly by a sound of scuffle, and then a shrill, long-drawn squeal, as of metallic surfaces in friction. Our scout had fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Indolence alone had made us devolve the task of investigation on our younger brother. Now that danger had declared itself, there was no hesitation. In a second we were down the side of the porch, and crawling Cherokee-wise through the laurels to the back of the garden-seat. Piteous was the sight that greeted us. Aunt Maria was on the seat, in a white evening frock, looking—for an aunt—really quite nice. On the lawn stood an incensed curate, grasping our small brother by a large ear, which—judging from the row he was making—seemed on the point of parting company with the head it completed and adorned. The gruesome noise he was emitting did not really affect us otherwise than aesthetically. To one who has tried both, the wail of genuine physical anguish is easily distinguishable from the pumped-up *ad misericordiam* 'blubber. Harold's could clearly be recognised as belonging to the latter class. "Now you young—" (whelp, *I* think it was, but Edward stoutly maintains it was devil), said the curate sternly, "tell us what you mean by it!"

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"Well, leggo of my ear then," shrilled Harold, "and I'll tell you the solemn truth ' "

"Very well," agreed the curate, releasing him "now go ahead, and don't lie more than you can help "

We abode the promised disclosure without the least misgiving ; but even we had hardly given Harold due credit for his fertility of resource and powers of imagination.

"I had just finished saying my prayers," began that young gentleman slowly, "when I happened to look out of the window, and on the lawn I saw a sight which froze the marrow in my veins ' A burglar was approaching the house with snake-like tread ' He had a scowl and a dark lantern, and he was armed to the teeth ' "

We listened with interest The style, though unlike Harold's native notes, seemed strangely familiar

"Go on," said the curate grimly

"Pausing in his stealthy career," continued Harold, "he gave a low whistle Instantly the signal was responded to, and from the adjacent shadows two more figures glided forth. The miscreants were both armed to the teeth "

"Excellent," said the curate "proceed "

"The robber chief," pursued Harold, warming to his work, "joined his nefarious comrades, and conversed with them in silent tones His expression was truly ferocious, and I ought to have said that he was armed to the t——"

"There, never mind his teeth," interrupted the curate rudely, "there's too much jaw about you altogether Hurry up and have done "

"I was in a frightful funk," continued the narrator, warily guarding his ear with his hand, "but just then the drawing-room window opened, and you and Aunt Maria came out—I mean emerged The burglars

THE BURGLARS

vanished silently into the laurels, with horrid implications ! ”

The curate looked slightly puzzled The tale was well sustained, and certainly circumstantial After all, the boy might really have seen something How was the poor man to know—though the chaste and lofty diction might have supplied a hint—that the whole yarn was a free adaptation from the last Penny Dreadful lent us by the knife-and-boot boy ?

“ Why did you not alarm the house ? ” he asked

“ ‘Cos I was afraid,” said Harold sweetly, “ that p’raps they mightn’t believe me ”

“ But how did you get down here, you naughty little boy ? ” put in Aunt Maria

Harold was hard pressed—by his own flesh and blood, too !

At that moment Edward touched me on the shoulder and glided off through the laurels. When some ten yards away he gave a low whistle I replied with another The effect was magical Aunt Maria started up with a shriek Harold gave one startled glance around, and then fled like a hare, made straight for the back door, burst in upon the servants at supper, and buried himself in the broad bosom of the cook, his special ally The curate faced the laurels—hesitatingly But Aunt Maria flung herself on him “ O Mr Hodgitts,” I heard her cry, “ you are brave ! for my sake do not be rash ! ” He was not rash When I peeped out a second later the coast was entirely clear.

By this time there were sounds of a household timidly emerging, and Edward remarked to me that perhaps we had better be off. Retreat was an easy matter. A stunted laurel gave a leg-up on to the garden wall, which led in its turn to the roof of an outhouse, up which, at a dubious angle, we could crawl to the window of the box-room This overland

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route had been revealed to us one day by the domestic cat, when hard pressed in the course of an otter-hunt, in which the cat—somewhat unwillingly—was filling the title *rôle*, and it had proved distinctly useful on occasions like the present. We were snug in bed—minus some cuticle from knees and elbows—and Harold, sleepily chewing something sticky, had been carried up in the arms of the friendly cook ere the clamour of the burglar-hunters had died away.

The curate's undaunted demeanour, as reported by Aunt Maria, was generally supposed to have terrified the burglars into flight, and much kudos accrued to him thereby. Some days later, however, when he had dropped in to afternoon tea, and was making a mild curatorial joke about the moral courage required for taking the last piece of bread-and-butter, I felt constrained to remark dreamily, and as it were to the universe at large, "Mr Hodgitts, you are brave! for my sake do not be rash!"

Fortunately for me, the vicar also was a caller on that day; and it was always a comparatively easy matter to dodge my long-coated friend in the open

KENNETH GRAHAME

THE CROCKMAN

THE Crockman journeys along quiet lanes and hill-tracks, and as a rule the small market town in the centre of a lonely district is the largest place he ever sees. As his name implies, he sells china—or, rather, rough earthenware, deep red, partly glazed milk-bowls, yellow butter-crocks, blue and white barrel milk-jugs and "semi-porcelain" cups and saucers such as are used in farmhouses and cottages.

He sells salt too, which is always in demand. A bar of salt, in addition to the huge basket of groceries,

THE CROCKMAN

is too much even for the strong arms of "mother," as she starts courageously home on market-day, coming first by carrier's cart, which sets her down a mile or so from home. So she is glad to have the salt brought to her door.

A strong float, like a coster's cart, is the Crockman's vehicle. It is drawn by an old pony bought for a song, or by a hill pony broken-in at home. The float looks gay careering along bleak hillsides, down misty valleys, and drawing up with a flourish before the open door of the farm. There is a subdued clashing of ware. If it is sunny, the daffodil-tinted bowls and terra-cotta buttermits glow like jewels. The salt sparkles. Willow-pattern dishes shine clearly. Out comes the Missus. She buys a bar of salt, six pitcher eggs, and a large pot-bellied beer-jug with red flowers painted on it, because the maister's jug was broken last harvest. The bargaining over, the Crockman has a mug of ale, or, if there is prosperation on the farm, a sit-down knife-and-fork tea with bacon and potatoes.

On market-day in his metropolis the Crockman renews his stores, spreads his wares on straw in the market, generally in the open air, and from the rostrum of an orange-box proceeds to sell them.

When his great voice goes roaring down the busy aisles a crowd gathers—lads with straws in their mouths, old ladies in white aprons and vast brooches of polished stone, girls with butter baskets, shepherds whose calm will probably be undisturbed by Judgment Day, children with gingerbread in their mouths and on their persons.

The Crockman holds up a large willow-pattern dish

"Tuppence "

"Fl'pence "

"Ladies and gents, this is 'eartbreaking! The

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biggest dish ever I sold ' You can put half a sheep on it if you've a mind. Ladies, *if* you please ' "

" A tanner."

" Ten three fardens "

" Now, now, people all, you're laughing at poor Jack. Ten-three for a dish worth five shilling ? "

" A bob "

The bidding stops.

" The Ten Commandments," says the Crockman, " you may forget and welcome But meanness I cannot abide. A bob for my beautiful dish ? People, I'd sooner *break* it ' "

And holding it high above his head he sends it crashing on to the pavement

Who is to know, unless the Crockman tells the secret, that the dish was " flawed seconds " and only intended for this dramatic moment ' "

MARY WEBB

THE FAMILY CAR

IN the autumn Augustus bought a car from an American friend. It was a small high-powered Buick, and after half-an-hour's driving lesson he set off to drive it down from London with a carload of people in it. On the way down he only knocked over one barrel-organ, and I think, but I cannot be certain, derailed a tram. His lesson had not included gear-changing, and he was therefore in top gear all the way, luckily, the engine was so powerful that it didn't matter much. The arrival at Alderney was rightly considered a great triumph. I insisted on being taught to drive immediately, and David, who had never driven a car in his life, but who had had much experience with a motor bicycle, undertook the task. I had often observed other drivers, and was

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therefore a qualified chauffeur in theory, so that after about half an hour I was considered competent to drive out by myself. It was then Dorelia's turn. By the evening the house was full of newly-fledged drivers, and in a few days it was considered a mere nothing to go spinning along at sixty miles an hour. I shall never forget my first application for a driving licence; I was no good at telling lies, and I blushed furiously while informing the clerk that I was "just eighteen." While the ink on the licence was still wet I was arrested by a policeman on point-duty for attempting to mow him down; but, flaunting my brand-new licence in his face, I escaped with a warning. After that we always seemed to be whizzing—the right word for our mode of transit—up to London. In those days the roads were still fairly empty, and motoring was still a sport. We nearly always came up with another fast car, also on its way to town, and then we would race it for a hundred miles. No matter who was driving, we made it a point of honour never to be outdone, and we very seldom were. When our car and its rival had passed and repassed each other several times, emotion would work up to a white-heat, and every minor victory was the signal of a wild hilariousness. Curiously enough, none of us seemed to have any nerves in those days. It needed several shattering accidents to develop that sensitiveness to danger which is perhaps the thing about the age in which we live. Very quickly, however, we began to doubt each other's capacity for dealing with emergencies. Dorelia would reproach John for the speed at which he shot round corners, and he, on the other hand, became irritated by what he considered her too frequent use of the horn. In fact, none of us really felt in the least safe while we were being driven by any of the others. People who were ordinarily quite humble members of society

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would unblushingly assert that they were excellent drivers, and that everybody else's driving was beneath contempt. I will not attempt to conceal that some of us were secretly glad when some others incurred some minor accident. We hoped, vainly of course, that it would convince him or her that he or she was not a fit person to be in charge of a motor car. I, like everyone else, thought myself the best, and indeed only tolerable driver, but *my* claim, I need not say, was based on something solidier than the mere tendency of the human being to over-estimate his own abilities. I, at any rate, certainly possessed a strong mechanical bias, I *understood* the car. It did not occur to me that I remained equally likely to smash it up, and, like the others, I did smash it. Augustus's driving had one fatal flaw; he was apt, especially in good country, to forget he was engaged in it, and to allow the car to whizz on unregarded, while he looked back over his shoulder at the distant view. On one such occasion he awoke to find himself driving through the iron gate of a churchyard—evidently a providential hint to him to look alive. The car soon began to present a dilapidated appearance; the brakes almost ceased to function, and at length the mechanism had to be worked by two persons at once. For instance, starting up a steep hill one driver would have to take the hand-brake off at the precise moment when the other caused the engine to engage with the wheels. If the brake came off a moment too soon the car would go shooting backwards down the hill, while everyone waited in agony for someone else to do something about it. If the brake was too late the car gave a leap forward, shuddered and groaned for some time like a mammoth in extremity, and then came to a standstill. Sometimes about half a dozen trials had to be made before the car, with its flushed occupants, would finally drag itself up the

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hill and away from the scene of its late humiliations, where, as often as not, a crowd of curious bystanders raised a feeble cheer. Yet in spite of all vicissitudes it continued to function noisily for several years, and was only abandoned at last, somewhere near London, upside down and in a state bordering on the chaotic. Dorelia upon that occasion was flung far out on to the road, whence, deciding after a minute or two that she was not mortally injured, or indeed injured at all, she cheerfully rose and went in quest of Augustus, who was a good deal entangled in the machinery, but equally unscathed. Nothing is more remarkable than the way people can escape uninjured from those catastrophes in which solid masses of steel are bent about like putty

ROMILLY JOHN

THE CRICKET MATCH

The Fordenden team ranged themselves at the bidding of their captain, the Fordenden baker, in various spots of vantage amid the daisies, buttercups, dandelions, vetches, thistle-down, and clumps of dark-red sorrel ; and the blacksmith having taken in, just for luck as it were, yet another reef in his snake-buckle belt, prepared to open the attack. It so happened that, at the end at which he was to bowl, the ground behind the wicket was level for a few yards and then sloped away rather abruptly, so that it was only during the last three or four intensive, galvanic yards of his run that the blacksmith, who took a long run, was visible to the batsman or indeed to anyone on the field of play except the man stationed in the deep field behind him. This man saw nothing of the game except the blacksmith walking back dourly and the blacksmith running up

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ferociously, and occasionally a ball driven smartly over the brow of the hill in his direction.

The sound club player having taken guard, having twiddled his bat round several times in a nonchalant manner, and having stared arrogantly at each fieldsmen in turn, was somewhat surprised to find that, although the field was ready, no bowler was visible. His doubts, however, were resolved a second or two later, when the blacksmith came up, breasting the slope superbly like a mettlesome combination of Vulcan and Venus Anadyomene. The first ball which he delivered was a high full-pitch to leg, of appalling velocity. It must have lighted upon a bare patch among the long grass near long-leg, for it rocketed, first bounce, into the hedge and four byes were reluctantly signalled by the village umpire. The row of gaffers on the rustic bench shook their heads, agreed that it was many years since four byes had been signalled on that ground, and called for more pints of old-and-mild. The other members of Mr Hodge's team blanched visibly and called for more pints of bitter. The youngish professor of ballistics, who was in next, muttered something about muzzle velocities and started to do a sum on the back of an envelope.

The second ball went full-pitch into the wicket-keeper's stomach and there was a delay while the deputy wicket-keeper was invested with the pads and gloves of office. The third ball, making a noise like a partridge, would have hummed past Mr Livingstone's left ear had he not dexterously struck it out of the ground for six, and the fourth took his leg bail with a bullet-like full-pitch. Ten runs for one wicket, last man six. The professor got the fifth ball on the left ear and went back to the Three Horseshoes, while Mr Harcourt had the singular misfortune to hit his wicket before the sixth ball was even delivered.

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Ten runs for two wickets and one man retired hurt. A slow left-hand bowler was on at the other end, the local rate-collector, a man whose whole life was one of infinite patience and guile. Off his first ball the massive Cambridge Blue was easily stumped, having executed a movement that aroused the professional admiration of the Ancient who was leaning upon his scythe. Donald was puzzled that so famous a player should play so execrable a stroke until it transpired, later on, that a wrong impression had been created and that the portentous Boone had gained his Blue at Cambridge for rowing and not for cricket. Ten runs for three wickets and one man hurt.

The next player was a singular young man. He was small and quiet, and he wore perfectly creased white flannels, white silk socks, a pale-pink silk shirt, and a white cap. On the way down in the char-a-banc he had taken little part in the conversation and even less in the beer-drinking. There was a retiring modesty about him that made him conspicuous in that cricket eleven, and there was a gentleness, an almost finicky gentleness about his movements which hardly seemed virile and athletic. He looked as if a fast ball would knock the bat out of his hands. Donald asked someone what his name was, and was astonished to learn that he was the famous novelist, Robert Southcott himself.

Just as this celebrity, holding his bat as delicately as if it was a flute or a fan, was picking his way through the daisies and thistle-down towards the wicket, Mr. Hodge rushed anxiously, tankard in hand, from the Three Horseshoes and bellowed in a most unpoetical voice. "Play carefully, Bobby. Keep your end up. Runs don't matter."

"Very well, Bill," replied Mr. Southcott sedately.

Mr. Southcott took guard modestly, glanced fur-

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tively round the field as if it was an impertinence to suggest that he would survive long enough to make a study of the fieldsmen's positions worth while, and hit the rate-collector's first ball over the Three Horse-shoes into a hay-field. The ball was retrieved by a mob of screaming urchins, handed back to the rate-collector, who scratched his head and then bowled his fast yorker, which Mr Southcott hit into the saloon bar of the Shoes, giving Mr Harcourt such a fright that he required several pints before he fully recovered his nerve. The next ball was very slow and crafty, endowed as it was with every iota of finger-spin and brain-power which a long-service rate-collector could muster. In addition, it was delivered at the extreme end of the crease so as to secure a background of dark laurels instead of a dazzling white screen, and it swung a little in the air ; a few moments later the urchins, by this time delirious with ecstasy, were fishing it out of the squire's trout stream with a bamboo pole and an old bucket.

The rate-collector was bewildered. He had never known such a travesty of the game. It was not cricket. It was slogging ; it was wild, unscientific bashing, and furthermore, his reputation was in grave danger. The instalments would be harder than ever to collect, and Heaven knew they were hard enough to collect as it was, what with bad times and all. His three famous deliveries had been treated with contempt—the leg-break, the fast yorker, and the slow, swinging off-break out of the laurel bushes. What on earth was he to try now ? Another six and he would be laughed out of the parish. Fortunately the village umpire came out of a trance of consternation to the rescue. Thirty-eight years of umpiring for the Fordenden Cricket Club had taught him a thing or two and he called “ Over ” firmly and marched off to square-leg. The rate-collector was glad to give way to a Free

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Forester, who had been specially imported for this match. He was only a moderate bowler, but it was felt that it was worth while giving him a trial, if only for the sake of the scarf round his waist and his cap. At the other end the fast bowler pounded away grimly until an unfortunate accident occurred. Mr. Southcott had been treating with apologetic contempt those of his deliveries which came within reach, and the blacksmith's temper had been rising for some time. An urchin had shouted, "Take him orf!" and the other urchins, for whom Mr. Southcott was by now a firmly established deity, had screamed with delight. The captain had held one or two ominous consultations with the wicket-keeper and other advisers, and the blacksmith knew that his dismissal was at hand unless he produced a supreme effort.

It was the last ball of the over. He halted at the wicket before going back for his run, glared at Mr. Harcourt, who had been driven out to umpire by his colleagues—greatly to the regret of Mr. Bason, the landlord of the Shoes—glared at Mr. Southcott, took another reef in his belt, shook out another inch in his braces, spat on his hand, swung his arm three or four times in a meditative sort of way, grasped the ball tightly in his colossal palm, and then turned smartly about and marched off like a Pomeranian grenadier and vanished over the brow of the hill. Mr. Southcott, during these proceedings, leant elegantly upon his bat and admired the view. At last, after a long stillness, the ground shook, the grasses waved violently, small birds arose with shrill clamours, a loud puffing sound alarmed the butterflies, and the blacksmith, looking more like Venus Anadyomene than ever, came thundering over the crest. The world held its breath. Among the spectators conversation was suddenly hushed. Even the urchins, understanding somehow that they were assisting at a crisis in affairs,

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were silent for a moment as the mighty figure swept up to the crease. It was the charge of Von Bredow's Dragoons at Gravelotte over again.

But alas for human ambitions! Mr. Harcourt, swaying slightly from leg to leg, had understood the menacing glare of the bowler, had marked the preparation for a titanic effort, and—for he was not a poet for nothing—knew exactly what was going on. And Mr. Harcourt sober had a very pleasant sense of humour, but Mr. Harcourt rather drunk was a perfect demon of impishness. Sober, he occasionally resisted a temptation to try to be funny. Rather drunk, never. As the giant whirlwind of vulcanic energy rushed past him to the crease, Mr. Harcourt, quivering with excitement and internal laughter, and wobbling uncertainly upon his pins, took a deep breath and bellowed, "No ball!"

It was too late for the unfortunate bowler to stop himself. The ball flew out of his hand like a bullet and hit third-slip, who was not looking, full pitch on the knee-cap. With a yell of agony third-slip began hopping about like a stork until he tripped over a tussock of grass and fell on his face in a bed of nettles, from which he sprang up again with another drum-splitting yell. The blacksmith himself was flung forward by his own irresistible momentum, startled out of his wits by Mr. Harcourt's bellow in his ear, and thrown off his balance by his desperate effort to prevent himself from delivering the ball, and the result was that his gigantic feet got mixed up among each other and he fell heavily in the centre of the wicket, knocking up a cloud of dust and dandelion-seed and twisting his ankle. Rooks by hundreds arose in protest from the vicarage cedars. The urchins howled like intoxicated banshees. The gaffers gaped. Mr. Southcott gazed modestly at the ground. Mr. Harcourt gazed at the heavens. Mr. Harcourt did

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not think the world had ever been, or could ever be again, quite such a capital place, even though he had laughed internally so much that he had got hiccups.

Mr. Hodge, emerging at that moment from the Three Horseshoes, surveyed the scene and then the scoreboard with an imperial air. Then he roared in the same rustic voice as before

“ You needn’t play safe any more, Bob. Play your own game ”

“ Thank you, Bill,” replied Mr Southcott as sedately as ever, and, on the resumption of the game, he fell into a kind of cricketing trance, defending his wicket skilfully from straight balls, ignoring crooked ones, and scoring one more run in a quarter of an hour before he inadvertently allowed, for the first time during his innings, a ball to strike his person.

“ Out ! ” shrieked the venerable umpire before anyone had time to appeal

A. G. MACDONELL

NOTES

The Argonauts

Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), Rector of Eversley, was keenly interested in social reform, and in his early novels, "Alton Locke" and "Yeast," he advocates a type of Christian socialism. His best novels, "Westward Ho!" and "Hereward the Wake," deal with historical adventure and the sea, in which as a Devonshire man he naturally delighted. His best poetic work is found in a few short lyrics like "The Sands of Dee", while of his prose work "The Heroes"—a group of Greek legends—and "The Water Babies" are still popular with the young.

Argonauts the crew of the *Argo*, the ship built by Argus for Jason. They are said to have numbered fifty, and included most of the heroes of the time.

P 3, l 1 *Mēdēia* daughter of Aietes, King of Colchis (on the Black Sea). He was the guardian of the Golden Fleece, which hung on a sacred oak.

l 5 *Arēs* the Greek god of war.

l 13 *Jason* the leader of the Argonauts.

l 20 *Ell* a yard and a quarter.

P 4, l 14 *Circē* actually the sister of Medeia's father. She lived in the island of Aeaea, and was famous for her magic.

l 21 *Prōmētheus* stole fire from heaven and taught men the useful arts. In revenge, Zeus chained him to a rock in the Caucasus, where during the day an eagle consumed his flesh, which was restored each night.

l 27 *Virtue* power.

P 5, l 16 *Arthālīdēs* the herald of the Argonauts.

l 37 *Mīnūai* the Argonauts, so called because most of them were descended from an ancient Greek race of that name.

P. 6, l 2 *Chalcidōpe* daughter of Aietes.

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- P 8, l 26 *Iolcos* the home of Jason, in Thessaly.
 P 9, l 17 *Yearling* a year old
 P 10, l 6 *Fathom* six feet
 l 15 *Reach* the straight part of a river between two bends.
 P 11, l 21 *Paean* a song of triumph

Orpheus and Eurydice

Sir George William Cox (1827-1902), historical and classical writer, won wide popularity with "Tales from Greek Mythology" (1861) and similar volumes

- P 11, l 26 *Thessaly* a district in the east of Greece.

Ulysses and the Cyclops.

Charles Lamb (1775-1834) was educated at Christ Hospital, London, where he formed a friendship with Coleridge. He was employed as a clerk, first at South Sea House, and later at the India House. He is best known as the author of the "Essays of Elia," which express freely his whimsical personality and humour, his love of London and of the antique and peculiar in literature, in furniture, books, and customs. With his sister, Mary, he published "Tales from Shakespeare." The extract quoted is from "The Adventures of Ulysses," a simple version of the *Odyssey*.

Cyclops a one-eyed giant

- P 18, l 10 *Abroad* out in the fields
 l 20 *Neptune* the god of the sea
 P 19, l 2 *Agamemnon* the commander-in-chief of the Greek army that besieged Troy
 l 8 *Jove* or Jupiter, chief of the gods
 ll 13-14 *Nursed by a goat* the Greek fable ran that Jupiter was fed with goat's milk by Amalthea, daughter of the King of Crete
 P 20, l 12 *Quiver* a cylindrical case for arrows
 l 26 *Parts* the parts they were to play what they were to do
 l 30 *Issue* outcome, result.
 l 32. *Dams* females
 l 35 *Waxed* grew
 P 21, l 14 *Brave* fine, good
 P 22, l 27 *Gross* stupid
 l 31 *Osier* a kind of willow used in making baskets
 P 24, l 4 *Ithaca* Ulysses' native island, off the west coast of Greece
 l. 5 *Crowded sail* hoisted as much sail as possible

NOTES

ll 6-7 *With a forward gale* with the wind behind them.

The Death of Baldur

Baldur the sun-god, son of Odin

P 24, l 8 *Asgard* the home of the gods.

l 12 *Æsir* gods

l 13 *Asynjar* goddesses

l 22 *Frigga* wife of Odin, and chief of the goddesses.

l 23 *Bifrost* the rainbow bridge of Asgard, leading to the fountain of the Nornir

Urd the Norn, or Fate, of the Past.

P 25, l 1 *Hel* Queen of Death

l 9 *Valhalla* the palace of bliss inhabited by the heroes slain in battle, and chosen to feast with Odin.

l 19 *Nornir* the Fates

l 21. *Breidablik* Baldur's palace

l 22 *All-Father* Odin

l 23 *Niflheim* the region of endless cold and everlasting night, ruled over by Hel

l 24 *Sibyl* prophetess

l 25 *Sleipnir* the eight-legged horse of Odin

l 32 *Barrow* burial mound

Spae-wife prophetess

l 34 *Runes* secret or magic poetry or writing

l 36 *Mimir* the guardian of the well of wisdom

P 26, l 15 *Mead* honey and water fermented and flavoured

l 19 *Bane* destruction, death

l 21 *Hodr* the blind god of darkness

l 34. *Loki* the god of fire

The Darkness the Twilight of the Gods, when the present world and all its inhabitants were to be destroyed

P 27, l 8 *Midgard* the world of man, the earth.

l 11 *Swart* black, dark

l 18. *Garth* enclosure, garden

P 29, l 25. *Ragnarok* the day of the destruction of the gods

P 30, l 8 *Ase* a god.

l 14 *Valkyrjar* the warrior-maidens of Odin, who choose from the slain those who are to live and feast with Odin in Valhalla.

l 35 *Pyre* a pile of wood, on which a body is burned

Excalibur

Sir Thomas Malory (*fl* 1470) is famous for his translation

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from the French of the various legends about Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, published by Caxton in 1485 under the title "Le Morte d'Arthur"
Excalibur : Arthur's magic sword, given him by the Lady of the Lake

- P 31, l 28 *Brast* · burst
 l 31 *Heavy* sad
 l 32 *Holpen* · helped
 P 32, l 6 *Wit* know
 And if
 Might could
 l 8 *Hieth* hasteneth
 l 14 *Lightly* quickly
 l 27 *Lief* dear
 l 29 *Him thought* it seemed to him
 l 30 *Eft* · again.
 l 34 *Wap* lap
 Wan ebb
 l 36 *Wend* thought
 P 33, l 4 *But if* unless
 l 20 *Hoved* waited, lay
 l 37 *Avilion* · an ocean island, where Arthur resided and was buried

Death and the Ruffians.

Charles Cowden-Clarke (1787-1877) was a London publisher, a friend of Keats, and is remembered for his prose versions of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales"

- P. 35, l 7 *Sworn brethren* those who have interchanged oaths of friendship and loyalty with each other
 l 15 *Churl* fellow
 l 16 *Clouted* patched
 l 31 *Hair-cloth* a hair shirt
 P 37, l 7 *Yerk* jerk, thrust
 l 22 *Corn* grain

The Devil and St Dunstan

Joseph Hilaire Pierre Belloc (b 1870) was born in France and educated at the Oratory School, Edgbaston, and Balliol College, Oxford. He is a versatile writer on all subjects. His best-known works are "The Path to Rome" (1902), "The Four Men," "Marie Antoinette," a "History of England," and "Wolsey" (1930)

St Dunstan : a famous churchman, statesman, and metal-worker of the tenth century

NOTES

- P. 38, l. 11. *The Weald* : the plain between the North and the South Downs The various places mentioned in this passage lie in the Weald, or on the Downs.
- l 18 *Patent* sole right
- l 27. *Tonsure* the shaven part on the crown of a priest's head
- P 39, l 3 *Woundy* excessive, very great
- P 40, l 4 *Shoreham* on the coast a few miles west of Brighton
- l 6. *Dyke* - ditch
- l 9 *Spit* a narrow piece of land
- l 12 *Populus Tuus Domine* " Thy people, O Lord " (Latin)
- l 15 *Rother* a tributary of the Arun, a river entering the sea at Arundell, west of Brighton

Escape from School.

- Thomas de Quincey (1785-1859), the friend of Wordsworth, Lamb, and Coleridge, produced an enormous mass of florid but hazy work He lives by one book, "The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater" (1821), in which he has recaptured the sonorous imaginative prose of Sir Thomas Browne
- P 43, l 6 *Codicil* : a short note added to a will , an addition
- P 44, l 9 *Mr Lawson* the headmaster
- l 15 *Valediction* farewell blessing
- l 22. *Collegiate church* - a church which has a college, or chapter, of canons.
- P 45, l 8 *Atlantean* like those of Atlas, who bore the world on his shoulders
- l 12. *Event* result
- ll 20-21 *Archdidascalus* - headmaster
- l 28 *Contretemps* something happening at the wrong time , a hitch
- l 29. *Canorous* : musical
- l 30 *The "Seven Sleepers"* seven young nobles of Ephesus, who fled from persecution to a cave, and slept there for 230 years
- P. 46, l. 19 *Canter's Euripides* an edition of the plays of the Greek dramatist, Euripides (480-406 B C)

Schooldays

Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882), the great naturalist and the exponent of the theory of natural selection, carried out his first important observations during a

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trip to South America, described in "The Voyage of the Beagle" His theory of evolution was later fully developed in "The Origin of Species" (1859) and other works He revolutionised biology and affected the whole trend of science and thought

- P 46, l 21 *Natural history* the study of nature, especially of living creatures
- l. 24 *Franks* signatures or signs formerly attached to letters, denoting that they were to be sent free of charge
- ll 29-30 *Variability of plants* departure from the usual qualities of the type of plant
- P 48, l 10 *Classical* devoted to the teaching of Latin and Greek, together called the classics
- l 21 *Virgil* a great Latin poet (d 19 B C), best known as author of the "Aeneid"
- l 22 *Homer* the greatest of the Greek poets, and author of "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey"

Schooldays of Thomas Edwards

Samuel Smiles (1812-1904), physician, journalist, industrialist, and social reformer, advocated and practised "Self-help," and wrote a number of biographies, including his own, to illustrate its method and principles.

- P 49, l 4 *Lancaster School* one of the schools founded by Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) The main features of his system were the employment of older pupils as monitors and a mechanical method of teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic
- P 51, l 16 *Harry* rob, pillage
- l 18. *Oot* out
- Spoot* spout
- l. 31 "*Gorbals*" young birds

Tom Tulliver at School

George Eliot, or Mary Ann Evans (1819-1880), perhaps the most intellectual of women novelists, became known by her "Scenes from Clerical Life," published in "Blackwood's Magazine" Her subsequent novels dealt mostly with the middle-class life of the midlands, the greatest being "The Mill on the Floss," "Silas Marner," and "Middlemarch" Another great novel, "Romola," a tale of the Florence of the Renaissance, presents a wealth of learning, insight, and colour Her later novels suffer from excess of discussion and analysis, the earlier are preserved by direct presentation of character and by a touch of humour.

NOTES

- P 52, l 21 *Euclid* the system of geometry constructed by Euclid, a mathematician of Alexandria about 300 B.C.
- P. 54, l 4 *New dispensation* . a new set of regulations, or manner of treatment
- P. 55, l 2 *Lexicon* . dictionary
- l 11 *Peccavi* I have sinned, I am to blame (Latin)
- P 57, l 4 *Mors . communis* : "Death is common to all."

Charwoman and Office Boy

John Boynton Priestley (b. 1894) was educated in his native town of Bradford. After serving in France he went up to Cambridge. He quickly made his mark in journalism and literary criticism, and his "Meredith" (1926), "Peacock" (1927), and writings on the general history of the English novel are distinguished by a broad sanity. In 1929 he turned to the novel in the picaresque manner of the 18th century, and made an immediate hit with "The Good Companions." "Angel Pavement" (1930) did for London what its predecessor had done for the countryside. In both he paints a wide canvas with healthy heartiness, and love of the essential England, together with a profound analysis of the features of modern industrialism and a keen sympathy with its victims.

- P 60, l 3 *Hackney* a district in the north-east of London.
- P 61, l 1 *Bloods* . boys' papers or magazines, full of exciting stories of war and murder.
- P 62, ll 9-10 *School of thought* kind of ideas
- l 21 *Counsel for the prosecution* the lawyer who conducts the case against an accused man in court.

First Day at Randell's

Compton Mackenzie (b. 1883), the descendant of a family of authors and actors, was educated in London, and at Magdalen College, Oxford. His first important novels were "The Passionate Elopement" (1911), "Carnival" (1912), "Sinister Street" (1912) and "Guy and Pauline" (1915). After the outbreak of war, he went to the Dardanelles and entered the Intelligence Department. His experience is recorded in such works as "Gallipoli Memories" and "Athenian Memories." His work and powers are many-sided; he excels alike in the treatment of quiet country scenes, as in "The Darkening Green," in romantic reconstruction of history, as in "The Passionate Elopement," and in the realistic narrative of his war books.

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P. 66, l 3. *Lam* · to beat.

P 68, l 7. *Number 64* the number of Michael's home in Sinister Street

l 13 *Etons* the dress worn by schoolboys at Eton ; turned-down collar, untailed black dress-coat, etc

P 70, l. 2 *Ubiquitous* present everywhere, or seeming so.

A Tight Corner

George Alfred Henty (1832-1902), after an education at Westminster and Cambridge, had a wide experience of war, as a non-combatant. In the Crimea, he was with the hospital commissariat, and, after taking up journalism, he acted as war-correspondent during the Austro-Italian war (1866), in Abyssinia (1867-1868), in the Franco-German war (1870-1871), and many others. He turned this experience to good account in the numerous historical novels for boys that he turned out steadily from about 1870 onwards.

The extract is from "The Young Carthaginian," which deals with Hannibal's expedition from Spain (a Carthaginian colony) across the Alps to attack Rome

P. 73, l 13 *Numidians* light-armed cavalry from the desert country round Carthage

P 78, l 21 *Burnous* · a mantle with a hood, worn by the Arabs Cf p 198.

l 32 *Fungus* growths such as mushrooms and toadstools.

P. 83, l 5 *Astartê* the Phœnician or Carthaginian goddess of the moon.

The Siege of Alesia

James Anthony Froude (1818-1894) was educated at Westminster and Oriel College, Oxford. Reacting from the influence of Newman, he became the historian and apologist of the Reformation, on which most of his work centres. His "History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada" (1856-1870) was the result of years of study and patient research, and for its literary qualities has few rivals. His meeting with Carlyle in 1849, and his subsequent friendship, cast upon him the task of issuing Carlyle's reminiscences, life, and correspondence. In his last years he was deeply interested in the Colonies, many of which he visited, and described, as in "The English in the West Indies" and "Oceana". His interest in Ireland and the Irish Question produced "The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century" (1872-1874).

NOTES

In 1892 he was appointed Professor of Modern History at Oxford, and his lectures were published posthumously as "The Life and Letters of Erasmus," (1894), "English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century" (1895), and "The Council of Trent" (1895). Other works of note are "Short Studies on Great Subjects," "Caesar," and his only real novel, "The Two Chiefs of Dunboy," which deserves to be better known.

Alesia - the modern Alise, in the Côte d'Or, south-east of Paris. The siege took place during a general rising of the Gauls in 52 B.C.

P. 86, l. 8. *Blockhouse* a small fort, generally made of logs.

P. 87, ll. 1-2. *The fiery cross* a cross consisting of two sticks charred and dipped in blood. It was sent throughout a district in the Highlands as a signal or call to arms. It had to be circulated with all possible speed.

l. 28. *Vallus* a palisade.

Lorica a breastwork or parapet.

P. 88, l. 29. *Scorpions* military engines for throwing missiles.

P. 89, l. 32. *Cohorts* regiments.

P. 90, ll. 8-9. *Legionaries* members of a legion (three to six thousand men), soldiers.

l. 9. *Darts* javelins, or light spears for throwing with the hand.

"'Twas there that we parted——"

Dorothy Kathleen Broster was educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College and St. Hilda's College, Oxford. She has established a reputation as a writer of romantic historical novels, among which probably the most popular and most successful are "The Flight of the Heron" (1925), "The Gleam in the North" (1927), and "The Dark Mile" (1929), a trilogy revolving round the Jacobite rising of 1745.

The story begins in 1752, six years after the final defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden.

P. 92, l. 34. *Bartered* - given in exchange.

l. 35. *Levies* - troops raised by authority.

P. 93, l. 20. *Forbye* besides, except (Scot.).

l. 21. *Reek* smoke (Scot.).

P. 94, l. 17. *Aperture* opening.

P. 95, l. 3. *Ritual* customary, a matter of ceremony.

l. 15. *Mire chatha* - the rage of battle (Gaelic).

l. 16. *Went Berserk* was filled with the rage of battle, like the old Norse warriors.

l. 37. *Ardroy* : Cameron.

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- P. 96, l. 16 *Buttressed* . supported to strengthen it.
P. 97, l. 26 *Hypotheses* suppositions
l. 35. *Haft* handle
P. 98, l. 8 *Clubbed* . held by the barrel and used like a club

The Defence of the Fort

Francis Parkman (1823-1893), one of America's greatest historians, devoted himself to the early history of his country. He published a series of volumes dealing with the period from the beginnings of colonisation to the War of Independence. He was particularly acquainted with the Indians, and their history and habits, and "The Conspiracy of Pontiac," from which the present extract is taken, remains the classic study of the subject. His "Montcalm and Wolfe" is a vivid and accurate account of the Seven Years' War in Canada.

The extract describes an incident of the Indian rising against their new masters, the English, just after the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). The Indians attacked and captured most of the English forts on the borders of the settlements.

- P. 99, l. 3 *Shingles* thin pieces of wood, used instead of slates

We Escape

- P. 103, l. 10 *Burberry* a kind of raincoat
l. 26. *Kilometre* about five-eighths of a mile
P. 105, l. 6 *Mackintosh* a waterproof overcoat.
l. 11. *Hypothesis* . supposition
P. 106, l. 34 *Coppice* a wood of small trees or shrubs
l. 37 *Lake Constance* a large lake on the boundary between Germany and Switzerland

The Duel.

Stanley J. Weyman (1855-1928), born at Ludlow, in Shropshire, and educated at Shrewsbury and Christ Church, Oxford, was from his childhood interested in history. After practising for a time as a barrister, and attempting a few not very successful short stories, he took to the historical novel, beginning with "The House of the Wolf" (1890), a tale of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's. "The Wild Geese" (1893) and "Under the Red Robe" (1894) increased and established his reputation.

He excelled in the construction of elaborate plots and the description of exciting incidents.

NOTES

Flavia McMurrough's mare had been stolen by four armed men, and Colonel John Sullivan, the guest of her family, had gone, with his man, Bale, to Tralee, to discover the thieves and, if possible, to bring back the mare

- P 111, l 1 "Morning" morning drink
 l 11 "Colleen" a girl
 P 112, l 3 *Maître d'Armes* fencing-master
 l 11. *Small-sword* . a light sword for thrusting.
 P 113, l 12 *Signal* extraordinary, great
 P 114, l 4 *Privy to* having knowledge of a secret
 l 20 *Tralee* a town on the coast of S -W Ireland
 l 32 *Foil* a blunt sword used in fencing, having a button on the point
 P 116, l 11 *Les estropiés* people who are maimed or disabled
 l 25 *Manchot* one-handed person.
 l 31 *Boot-jack* an instrument for pulling off boots
 l 32 *Boot-hook* . an instrument for pulling on long boots
 P 117, ll 14-15 *Dead-hand* an expert
 P 118, l 8 *Tyro* a learner
 l 24 *Parbleu* by Jove !
 P 120, l 5 *Toadies* flatterers, hangers-on
 l 21 *Les gauchers* left-handed men
 ll 26-27 *Va, va* come, come !
 P 121, l 15 *Of the first force* first-class in strength and skill
 P 122, l 23 *Sacre !* good gracious !
 l 26 *Button* a knob at the end of a foil
 P 123, ll 12-13 *Ma foi* literally "(upon) my faith", I assure you

The Defence of the Cottage

Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866) was the son of a London merchant, and became an official of the East India Company, to which he was later Chief Examiner. He was the friend and executor of Shelley. His novels excel in sparkling wit and extravagant satire of contemporary follies and fashions. "Maid Marian," the least satirical but the most popular of his works, is a tale of Robin Hood, interspersed with exciting incident, humour, and witty dialogue.

Robin, with Maid Marian and the Baron, her father, while travelling in Yorkshire, were resting for the night in a cottage belonging to a former member of his band

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- Sir Ralph Montfaucon, a suitor of Marian's, had met them by chance, penetrated their disguise, and with his men secretly followed them to the cottage
- P. 127, l 8 *Longchamp* bishop of Ely, regent of England during the absence of Richard I
- l 9 *Prince John* afterwards King John At this time he was governing England for his brother, Richard I, then absent on the Third Crusade
- P. 128, l 10 *Basting* for pouring fat over roasting meat
- l 13 *Cullenders* sieves
- Mummy* powder.
- l. 28 *Spit* an iron prong or rod on which meat used to be roasted
- P. 129, l 25. *Amazon* a tall female warrior. The Amazons were a fabulous race, believed to have come from the Caucasus and to have settled in Asia Minor.
- P. 130, l 2 *Pipkin* a small earthen pot.
- l 12. *Cauldron* a large kettle

At Bay in the Inn

Charles Reade (1814-1884), a barrister of Lincoln's Inn, began his literary career as a dramatist His first success as a novelist was with "Peg Woffington" (1852). "It is never too late to mend" (1856) combines rapid narrative with the exposure of social abuses His greatest novel, however, is "The Cloister and the Hearth" (1861), a tale of the early sixteenth century Reade excelled, like Weyman, in story-telling and the use of suspense His situations, however, are often exaggerated and melodramatic

The extract shows Gerard (the father of the great scholar Erasmus) and his friend Denys in a tight corner during a journey from Holland to Italy Denys, before entering the inn, had been warned of the fate awaiting him

- P. 131, l 22 *Doublet* a close-fitting garment for the upper part of the body
- P. 132, l. 2. *Miscreant* scoundrel
- P. 134, l 24 *Parbleu* by Jove!
- P. 135, l. 10. *Phosphorus* Gerard used this to illuminate the manuscripts which it was his trade to copy
- l. 14 *Drôle* rogue, mischievous fellow
- P. 136, l. 4. "*La Mort*" "Death"
- l 11 *Diapason* a great volume of sound
- l. 15 *Colossus* a huge figure or statue The name was applied particularly to the huge brass statue of Apollo

NOTES

erected on one side of the entrance to the harbour at Rhodes

P 138, l 12 *Bolt* arrow

P. 139, l. 12. *Jobbed* : made a sudden stroke or stab

Robbed

P 140, l 26 "*Setting up*" beginning.

P 141, l 21 *Dunstan* the son of Squire *Cass*, and the thief of Silas's gold

P. 144, l 5 *A second time* Silas had been robbed of his lover in his youth

A Desperate Chase

Richard Doddridge Blackmore (1825-1900), though a prolific writer, is remembered as the author of one novel — "*Lorna Doone*" (1869), which, by its simplicity and dignity of style and romantic atmosphere, ranks as one of the great historical novels of the nineteenth century

P 145, l 5 *The Doones* a family, or rather several families, of robbers who lived in a valley on Dartmoor.

l 14. *Clouded* spotted

l 15 *Lavender* the sign of half-mourning for Earl Brandir's recent death He was one of the best of the Doones.

P 146, l 15 *Whit-Tuesday* · the seventh Tuesday after Easter.

P 147, l 14 *Spitting* · putting on a spit, that is, an iron prong on which meat is roasted

l 27 *Drop* the curtain at the front of the stage

l 28 *Quag* quagmire, bog

P 148, l 4 *Pistol-stock* the wood in which the barrel of the pistol is fixed

l 9 *Rowel* the wheel in a spur

l 17 *Slough* : bog.

l 30 *Awn* husk, head of grain

P 151, l 7 *Fowl* jaw

l 17 *Hummock* · small hump

ll 17-18 *Bog-oak* oak turned black by lying embedded in a bog

Aeneas of the Pistol.

Neil Munro (1864-1930) was born, of shepherd stock, at Inveraray, in Argyllshire After working as clerk and newspaper reporter on a number of Scottish papers, he became editor of the Glasgow "*Evening News*" His first efforts in literature were short stories ; from which he passed to the historical novel "*John Splendid*"

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established his reputation. In 1903 he abandoned the Highland settings for novels of modern life, but these have never enjoyed the same popularity, although "The Daft Days" approached it. Some of his poems successfully capture the Highland atmosphere of the early novels.

Ninian Campbell was going north to get information for the government concerning the attacks made on the soldiers who were building General Wade's "New Road", Aeneas on business for his uncle.

- P. 151, l. 28 *Peats* blocks of decayed vegetable matter, cut out of boggy places, dried, and used for fuel in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands
- l. 32. *Whins* gorse, furze
- P. 152, l. 4 *Laggan* a loch near the source of the River Spey
- l. 7. *Planting* plantation
- l. 20 *On an outer bar* closed by a bar on the outside of the door
- P. 153, l. 4 *Kittle* ticklish
- l. 8 *Badenoch* the district in south-east Inverness-shire in which Loch Laggan is situated
- l. 9 *The Act* a Disarming Act had been passed in 1715
- l. 10 *Palings-stobs* wooden posts used in constructing a wire fence
- l. 12 *Islay* Lord Islay, Keeper of the Privy Seal, brother of the Duke of Argyll. The brothers were the chief Highland supporters of the Hanoverian government, and opponents of the Jacobites
- l. 15 *Lock* the part of a musket where the discharge takes place
- l. 30. *Dirling* shaking, vibrating
- l. 36. *Ploy* frolic, game
- P. 154, l. 8 *Dun* brown, here applied to the complexion.
Wife woman
- l. 10 *Geared* equipped
- l. 16 *Flambeaux* torches
- l. 32 *Mo chreach* my grief (Gaelic)—an exclamation of sorrow and despair
- l. 35 *Kent* known
- l. 36. *Cheeping* squeaking
- l. 37 *Elder* a kind of officer in the Presbyterian Church.
- P. 155, l. 3 *Ca'd* moved quickly, rung
- l. 9 *Mind* remember
- l. 14 *Clunked* . rung the bell

NOTES

- l 28. *Corryarrick* a mountain-pass in Inverness-shire, to the south-east of Fort Augustus
- l 30 *Coble* a small boat, a yawl
- l 32 *Tholpins* the pins in the side of a rowing-boat to keep the oars in place
- P 156, ll 2-3. *The Messenger* Ninian was Messenger-at-Arms to the Duke of Argyll
- l 5 *Halberd of Lochaber* a long-shafted Highland battle-axe with a hook at the back of the blade
- l 7 *Stad ' - stop ' (Gaelic)*
- l 11. *Grey Colin* the name given by Ninian to his sword
- l 22 *Brake* thicket
- l 23 *Ardcoulle ' " the high wood "*—the slogan or war-cry of the clan Macgregor
- l 28 *Gregorach* Macgregor
- l 32 *Sin agad ' there's for you (Gaelic)*
- l 33 *Claymore* the long two-edged sword used by the Highlanders
- P 157, l 9 *Trews* - trousers made of tartan cloth
- l 23 *Strapper* - a person who harnesses horses
- l 33 *Swithered* hesitated
- P 158, l 4 *Swound* a swoon, a faint
- l 22 *Geyzing* leaking
- Boyne* tub
- ll 33-34 *Freeboara* the distance between the water-line and the upper side of the deck
- P 159, l 1. *Jouk* to duck
- l 10 *Burn* small stream
- l 11. *Sauch-trees* willows
- l 18 *Bonner* more beautiful.

Mr Polly to the Rescue.

Herbert George Wells (*b* 1866), during his early years, as apprentice to dry-goods dealers and druggists, was thrown on his own resources for his education. Winning a scholarship, he attended the Royal College of Science at South Kensington, taught for a time until his health broke down, and during convalescence began writing essays and sketches. His works include scientific romances like "*The Time Machine*" (1895), works and novels of social criticism, such as "*Tono-Bungay*" (1909), and "*The World of William Clissold*" (1926), novels largely biographical ("*Kipps*," 1905, "*Mr Polly*," 1910), and historical and scientific works of a popular nature, for example, "*The Outline of History*" He is one of the most clear-sighted and critical

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of modern writers, and his ideas are constantly developing

P 160, l 2 *Ecrû* made of unbleached linen

Peter stays out

Hugh Seymour Walpole (b 1884) is the son of a late Bishop of Edinburgh. After completing his education at Cambridge, he tried preaching and teaching, but found better success in journalism and literature. His first popular novel, "Fortitude," appeared in 1913. During the War he served as Red Cross orderly and government agent in Russia, his experience being reflected in "The Dark Forest" (1916) and "The Secret City" (1919). Besides the "Jeremy" books and biographies ("Trollope," 1928), he has recently written what is probably his greatest work, the four novels of the Herries series—"Rogue Herries" (1930), "Judith Paris" (1931), "The Fortress" (1932), and "Vanessa" (1933).

Sparrows on the Housetops

John Buchan was born at Perth in 1876, and educated at Glasgow University and at Oxford. His activities have been extensive. In 1901 he was called to the bar, he became a partner in the publishing house of Nelson, acted as war correspondent for "The Times", joined Sir Douglas Haig's staff as intelligence officer in 1916, and the next year became Director of Information. He has thus qualified himself for such various undertakings as "The History of the Great War" (1921-1922), his position as Governor-General of Canada, and the writing of essays, biographies, memoirs, and novels. His romances, such as "Greenmantle," "The Thirty-Nine Steps," and "Prester John," are marked by a care and vigour of style and rapidity of incident that recalls the works of Stevenson.

The extract is from "Greenmantle". Major Hannay (the narrator), Peter Pienaar (a Boer), and Blenkiron (an American) have been sent to Turkey on a secret service mission. On their way they have fallen foul of Colonel von Stumm in Germany. In Turkey they again meet Stumm, are recognised, and imprisoned.

P 175, l 15 *The deuce and all* very difficult

l 16. *Grampus* a kind of dolphin.

l 22 *Vertigo* . dizziness

Chimney a steep and narrow cleft in the face of a cliff or mountain

NOTES

- Table Mountain* the flat-topped mountain behind Cape Town
- l 24 *Shinned up* climbed
- P 177, l 27 *Hippo* hippopotamus
- l 33 *Mosque* Mohammedan church
- l 36 *Allah* the Mohammedan name for God
- P 178, l 15 *Deity* god
- l 18 *Cupola* . a dome
- l 19 *Parapet* a breast-high wall on the roof
- l 35 *Erzerum* . a Turkish fortress near the southern shore of the Black Sea
- l 36 *Foggiest* faintest, slightest
- P 179, l 14 *Impetus* the force of the jump
- l 22 *Tattoo* a beat of drums and a bugle-call to call soldiers to their quarters
- P 180, l 9 *Cotton to* take to, agree with
- l 11 *Annexed* took possession of
- File* papers placed in order, on a wire, or in a holding-case
- l 15 *'Possum* opossum, a rat-like American animal of the kangaroo family, about the size of a cat It lives mostly in trees

Breaking Wild Horses

- P 183, l 9 *Gaucha* South American (Argentine) horseman of Spanish-Indian descent
- l 12 *Lazo* lasso, a rope with a running noose
- l 17 *Fetlock* the tuft of hair behind a horse's foot, the part where this hair grows
- P. 185, l 32 *Demi-volte* . a half-turn, with the horse's feet in the air
- P. 186, l 23 *Sabres* swords
- l 32 *Mameluke* a Circassian slave who formerly acted as light horseman in Egypt

Blubber

Herman Melville (1819-1891) was born in New York Left fatherless at an early age, he sought his fortune at sea, first on a voyage to Liverpool, then to the South Pacific on board a whaler, which he deserted at the island of Nuku-Hiva After a short stay there, he embarked on an Australian whaler - the crew mutinied, and, on arriving at Tahiti, were put under arrest On his release, after various adventures on this island, he shipped on a third whaler to Honolulu, reached New York in 1844, and settled down to a literary life

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His books are the record of his experiences , " Typee " (1846) describes his stay on Nuku-Hiva the Australian whaler and Tahiti appear in " Omoo " (1847), " Moby Dick " (1851) records his whaling experiences In the latter novel, from which the extract is taken, Melville's powers of vivid narrative and description are at their best

- P. 187, l 1 *Tackles* ropes, etc , for raising heavy weights
- l 3 *Blocks* pulleys
- l 5 *Main-top* a platform on the top of the mainmast
- l 9 *Windlass* a cylinder round which ropes are wound in
- l 21 *Careen* · to tilt to one side
- l 22 *Starts* gives way a little
- P 188, l 1 *Spiralising* cutting in a spiral, like the thread of a screw
- P 189, l 13 *Insatiate* · not able to be satisfied
- l 18 *Rod* five and a half yards (= a pole)
- l 19 *Rood* a square pole

Hunting in the Amazon Forest

Henry Walter Bates (1825-1892), beginning his career as a clerk in Burton-on-Trent, became a great naturalist and devoted his life to travel and research in this branch of science In 1848 he accompanied A R Wallace to Pará, explored the Amazon and some of its tributaries, and discovered thousands of new species of plants and animals His " Naturalist on the Amazons " was published in 1863 He acted as assistant secretary to the Royal Geographical Society from 1864 till his death, and was twice president of the Entomological Society

- P 189, l 27 *Half-caste* half-breed
- l 28 *Mulatto* the child of one black and one white parent
- P 190, l 6 *Cayman* · a kind of alligator
- l 22 *Mandioca* manioc, or cassava, from the root of which tapioca is prepared
- P 191, l 25 *Tapir* · a large hog-like animal with a short movable trunk.
- l 27. *Jaguar* · a South American beast of prey, akin to the leopard
- P 194, l 21. *Farinha* ground corn , meal
- l 34 *Bast* · the inner bark of trees.
- P 195, l 10 *Curassow* a large turkey-like South American bird.

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Three Wonders.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1840–1922) lived, in England, the life of his “old squire,” the simple outdoor life described in his poetry. His political activities resolved themselves, like Burke’s, into a defence of rising or downtrodden nationalities—Ireland, Egypt, and India. A great part of his later life was spent quietly in Egypt, and is reflected, along with his political interests in the East, in “My Diaries.”

P 196, l 2 *Tetuan* a port of Morocco, 22 miles south of Ceuta

Morocco the City of Morocco, or Marakesch

l 31 *Berbers* a race of North Africa, west of Tripoli

P 197, l 27 *Marco Polo* a famous Venetian (c 1250–1323), celebrated for his travels in Central Asia, China, and India, over a period of twenty-four years

l 31 *Mesmeric* the result of mesmerism, caused by one’s thoughts being controlled and directed by another person

The Burnous

Norman Douglas (b 1868) has in turn devoted his attention to music, the diplomatic service, science and archaeology, and literature. Apart from early essays in zoology, and a few short stories, he wrote nothing of importance till the publication of “Siren Land” in 1911. “South Wind” appeared in 1917. These, together with “Fountains in the Sand” (1923) and “Old Calabria” (1928) deal for the most part with the island of Capri and the North of Africa, where the author spends most of his life. Norman Douglas has a remarkably unobtrusive and easy style, and his books are so full of encyclopaedic learning and profound reflection that they are likely always to have a select rather than a wide public.

P 198, ll 1–2 *Semi-nomad* one whose life is partly nomadic, i.e. spent in wandering from place to place

l 6 *The Apostle* Mohammed

Allah the Mohammedan name for God

His sacred book the Koran, the collected writings of Mohammed

l 18 *Unguents* ointments and oils, used for anointing

l 28 *Throwing-disks* a kind of quoit, the throwing of which was practised by the Greeks

P 199, l 11 *Gastric region* the stomach and other digestive organs

FACT AND FICTION

- l 19 *Digits* fingers
 - l 21 *Atrophied* · wasted away for want of use and exercise
 - l 27 *Fossilification* becoming a fossil, i.e. incapable of action, because turned to stone Fossils are the remains of animals, turned to stone, found in the rocks
 - l 28 *Anachronism* · something out of keeping with the age
 - l 30 *Vice versa* : the other way round
 - l 33 *Epitome* summary
 - P 200, l 17 *Toga* . cloak
 - l 19. *Cincinnatus* a famous Roman of the fifth century B.C., who was reduced to poverty, and retired to a small farm, which he cultivated himself He was appointed dictator, defeated the enemies of Rome, and governed for sixteen years, after which he again retired to his farm.
 - l 30 *Panathenaic* representing the chief national festival of Athens
Frieze · part of a wall near the ceiling, often ornamented, in a Greek temple, with figures and groups engaged in particular activities
 - l 32 *Hieratic* like a priest
 - l 34 *Antediluvian* belonging to the time before the Flood, very ancient
 - P 201, l 9 *Gafsa* an oasis west of Sfax in Tunis
- McEwen and the Eagle*
- Harry Mortimer Batten (b. 1888) has always been associated with natural history, which he studied in relation to game preservation in Canada and British Columbia, and on which he has written numerous volumes, and delivered numerous lectures He edits "The Zoo and Animal Annual"
- P 201, l 23 *Peat-hag* broken ground in a bog, consisting of peat or decayed vegetation
 - l 30 *Fore and aft* lengthwise, i.e. back and front legs together
 - P 202, l 1. *Ling* heather
 - l 7 *Corrie* a hollow in a hillside, generally having steep sides
 - l 9. *Grand Canyon* · a deep gorge, worn out by the action of the water, on the Colorado River, in southern U.S.A.
 - l 20 *Wafting* floating
 - P. 203, l 15 *Schedule* list of birds protected under the "Act for the Protection of Wild Birds"

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- l 16 *Shieling* a hut used by shepherds
- l 23 *Morn's morning* following morning
- l 31. *Redshank* a species of sandpiper
- l 36 *Muzzle-loader* an old-fashioned gun loaded from the muzzle
- l 37 *Slugs* pellets of metal.
- P 204, l 19 *Stag* the male deer
 Hind the female deer.
- l 24 *Milord* my lord (Fr)
- l 28 *Scion* descendant, inheritor
- P. 205, l 23 *Atom* small speck
- l 27. *Call note* the note by which one bird or beast calls to another, generally its young
- ll 30-31 *Pricking out* transplanting young plants before final planting
- l 31. *Seedling* young plants reared from seed.

Bull-fighting

- Ernest Hemingway (b. 1898) is the son of a doctor of Illinois. During his boyhood, in Michigan, he took part, as he still does, in sport of all kinds. His main occupation has been journalism, of which his direct, colloquial, staccato style is partly an effect. During the War he served in France as an ambulance volunteer, and in Italy, where he was seriously wounded. His best-known works are "Farewell to Arms" (1929), based on his Italian experiences, and "Death in the Afternoon" (1932), the result of his interest in bull-fighting.
- P 206, l 3 *Querencia* pron kerénthia
 - l 17 *Riposte* "reply, answering blow"
 - l 18 *Counter* a reply
 Lead an attacking blow
 - P 207, l 3 *Barrera* "the red painted wooden fence around the sanded ring in which the bull is fought. The first row of seats are also called barreras"
 - l 10 *Pass* a "movement of the lure (the cape) to draw a charge by the animal in which his horns pass the man's body"
 - P 208, l 31. *Cape* "the red cloth used to play the bull."
 - P 209, l. 3. *Matador* "a formal killer of bulls"
 - ll. 4-5 *Banderilleros* a "bullfighter under the orders of the matador and paid by him, who helps run the bull with the cape and places banderillas" The banderilla

FACT AND FICTION

is "a rounded dowl, seventy centimetres long, wrapped in coloured paper, with a harpoon-shaped steel point, placed in pairs in the withers of the bull in the second act of the bullfight, the prong of the harpoon catching under the skin"

- l 12. *Muleta* a light cape "used to defend the man, to tire the bull and regulate the position of his head and feet, to perform a series of passes . . . and to aid the man in the killing"

Sfax

Henry Major Tomlinson was born in the East End of London, among docks and shipping, the subject of so much of his writing. After some years in clerking and journalism, he went up the Amazon on a voyage described in "The Sea and the Jungle" (1912). Other books of a similar nature are "Old Junk" (1919) and "Gallion's Reach" (1927). From August 1914 he acted as war-correspondent in Belgium and France, and later (1915-1917) as official correspondent at the General Headquarters of the British Armies in France. His war experiences have produced "All our Yesterdays" (1930).

Sfax one of the chief ports of Tunisia

- P 209, l 25 *Mosque* a Mohammedan temple
Moslems · Mohammedans

- P 210, l. 2 *Exotic* foreign

- ll 9-10. *Resistance* *French* the French invaded the country in 1881, since when it has been a French protectorate

- l 14 *Algeria* the country between Tunisia and Morocco
It has been a French possession since 1830

- l 24 *Cowls* hoods.

- Jibbah* a kind of long outer coat worn by Mohammedans in North Africa

- P 211, ll 11-12 *To declare* . *prophet* that is, to become a Mohammedan

- ll 20-21 *Prophylactics* medicines, or charms, that ward off disease

- ll 21-22 *The evil eye* a power some people are supposed to have of causing evil or harm by the look of the eye

- l 24 *Amulet* · a gem, trinket, or similar object, carried about one's person, to ward off sickness, harm, or witchcraft

Fetish an object, the possession of which secures for

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its owner the services of a spirit supposed to be lodged within it

P. 212, l. 10 *Lake Tchad* or *Chad* a lake lying on the other side of the Sahara Desert south of Sfax

l. 14 *Hakluyt*. Richard Hakluyt (1553-1616) was an English divine, famous for his geographical learning, and especially for his "Voyages," a collection of accounts of English voyages of trade and discovery

l. 16 *Niger*. the great river that flows into the Gulf of Guinea, and for part of its course runs not far to the west of Lake Tchad

l. 17 *Arcana* secrets

Djinn spirits in Mohammedan mythology, especially those mentioned in "The Arabian Nights"

P. 213, l. 16. *Loathly* loathsome

l. 17 *Caravanseraï* a large enclosed court where caravans may halt

ll. 18-19 *One*. *Bethlehem* that in which Christ was born

l. 23 *Kabyles*. a branch of the Berber race in North Africa.

l. 24 *Virago*: a bold, masculine woman

l. 35 *New Jerusalem* the paradise or perfect city they will inhabit after death

P. 214, l. 1 *Trammels* hindrances

l. 6 *Esparto* a strong grass grown in N Africa, and used for making paper.

Whang the Miller

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774) was the son of an Irish clergyman—the kindly Mr Primrose of "The Vicar of Wakefield" After desultory studies at Dublin, Edinburgh, and Leyden, he travelled on foot over France, Switzerland, and Italy, earning his living by his flute. On his return to London, he produced various types of work: essays, collected in "The Citizen of the World", a novel, "The Vicar of Wakefield", two plays, "The Good-natured Man" and "She Stoops to Conquer"; and a few poems, including "The Traveller" and "The Deserted Village." His kindly humour and universal good-nature shine through all he wrote, and a natural and limpid style of exquisite charm has placed his work among the classics

P. 217, l. 6 *Stood for*: stood godfather to.

l. 26 *Moiling* labouring, drudging

FACT AND FICTION

Handy Andy

Samuel Lover (1797-1868) first applied himself to portrait-painting, but soon transferred his energies to writing ballads and songs, such as "Rory O'More," stories, dramas, and novels. Lover's versatility lowered the quality of almost all his work. "Handy Andy" (1842), his best-known novel, is formless and is only preserved from tediousness by the rollicking scenes of Irish humour with which it is sprinkled.

- P. 219, ll 29-30 *Pulling his forelock* to touch the lock of hair on the forehead—a substitute for raising one's hat
P. 220, l 13 *Scrape* . to draw back the foot in making a bow
l 34 *Whipper-in* . one who keeps the hounds from wandering, and whips them in to the line of the chase.
P. 221, l 1. *Of the old school* old-fashioned
l 2 *Valet* . male attendant

The Stuffed Trout

Jerome Klapka Jerome (1859-1927), born at Walsall, in Staffordshire, was brought up in the East End of London, and began work as a clerk at Euston. For a time he went on the stage, and afterwards eked out a living in journalism. He was in turn schoolmaster and private secretary. It was only in 1889 that he achieved fame and success with his two great humorous books, "Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow" and "Three Men in a Boat." Of his plays "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" is best-known. He completed his autobiography, "My Life and Times," in 1926.

- P. 222, l 18 *Wallingford* a village on the Thames not far from Oxford
P. 225, l 19 *Rule-of-three* the method of finding the fourth term in a proportion sum when three terms are given
P. 226, l 5 *Plaster-of-Paris* a kind of plaster used in making casts of figures

A Strange Story

O. Henry, or William Sydney Porter (1862-1910), was born at Greensboro, North Carolina. He worked in an uncle's drug-store and became a chemist. In 1882 he was forced to go to Texas for his health, and lived the life of a rancher. After following various occupations in Austin, he attempted to run a newspaper, *The Rolling Stone*, which, however, was not a success. He was afterwards imprisoned (although it is agreed that he

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was innocent) for irregularities in the National Bank at Austin, of which he had become teller. On his release, in 1901, he wrote short stories for various American periodicals.

He is among the greatest of American humorists and short story writers.

P 226, l 6 *Austin* · a town in Texas, U S A

l 11 *Write-up* · a newspaper report in praise of some person or event

l 14 *Colic* · severe pain in the intestines

l 21 *San Antonio* · the county seat of Bexar, in Texas.

The Burglars

Kenneth Grahame (1859–1932), the son of an Edinburgh advocate, combined mathematics and literature, like Lewis Carroll. He was secretary to the Bank of England, and wrote a number of children's books—"The Golden Age" (1895), "Dream Days" (1898), and "The Wind in the Willows" (1908).

P. 227, l 23 *The witching hour* · an allusion to *Ham'et*, III. ii 378–9 —

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn .

l 29 *Olympians* · the Greek gods, supposed to dwell on Mt Olympus here, the grown-ups

l 32–p 228 l 1 *Proclaiming foe* · a reference to a song very popular when this book was written

P 228, l 3 *A propos of* · about, concerning, in relation to.

P 229, l 7. *On tick* · on credit, without payment

l 10 *Dunned* · urged to pay

l 26 *Paddock* · a small field in which horses are kept.

l 37 *Immure* · shut in, keep inside the house

P. 230, l 4 *Tin* · money

l 33 *Reconnoitre* · to scout

P. 231, l 6 *Exit* · getting out

l 15. *In friction* · being rubbed against each other.

l 17 *Devolve on* · pass down to

l 21 *Cherokee-wise* · like a Red Indian.

l 25 *Incensed* · angry

l 30 *Aesthetically* · as a matter of taste. The brothers' feelings were not touched by the squeal

l 32–33 *Ad misericordiam* · with a view to producing pity (Latin)

P 233, ll 1–2 *Implications* · Harold meant "imprecations," or curses

FACT AND FICTION

- l 9 *Knife-and-boot boy* the boy who cleaned the knives and boots
 P 234, l 4. *Titte rôle* . the part from which a play gets its title
 l 6. *Cuticle* skin.
 l 12 *Kudos* . glory

The Crockman.

- Mary Webb (1881-1927) was born and bred in Shropshire Her works, which include "The Golden Arrow" (1916), "Gone to Earth" (1917), "The House in Dormer Forest" (1920), "Precious Bane" (1924), and the unfinished "Armour Wherein He Trusted" (1929), are full of an excessive richness of language, and a poetic interpretation of life and nature
- P 235, l 6 *Float* a cart with a low body
Coster : a hawker , one who carries about goods for sale
 l 13 *Terra-cotta* a mixture of clay and sand, hardened by fire
Buttermut . a small tub in which newly made butter is washed.
 l 17 *Maister* master, or owner of the farm
 l 19 *Prosperation* prosperity
 P. 236, l 3 *Tanner* sixpence
 l. 7. *Bob* shilling
 l 16 "*Seconds* " . crockery of inferior quality

The Family Car

- P 236, l 27 *Alderney* the manor house near Bournemouth in the south of England where the Johns lived
 P 238, l 16 *Augustus* Romilly John's father, the well-known painter
 l 28 *Engage* interlock, gear together (used of the engine of a car and the wheels)
 l 34. *Mammoth* : an extinct variety of elephant very large
 P 239, l 3 *Vicissitudes* changes
 l 6 *Chaotic* . like a shapeless mass.

The Cricket Match.

Archibald Gordon Macdonnell (*b* 1895) was educated at Winchester, and took part in the War as a lieutenant in the R F A His subsequent career has been divided between literature and politics He was on the Headquarters Staff of the League of Nations Union (1922-

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- 1927), and contested Lincoln as a Liberal in the elections of 1923 and 1924. He is chairman of the Guildford Liberal Association. In literature he has shown his powers of historical imagination in "Napoleon and his Marshals," and of humour and social criticism in "England, their England."
- P 239, l 27 *Galvanic* as if affected by an electric shock
 l 32 *Dourly* (dōorly) in a determined manner
- P 240, l 4 *Nonchalant* careless, cool
 l 11 *Vulcan* the Roman god of metal-working (i.e. a blacksmith), and the consort of Venus
Venus Anadyomene Venus rising out of the sea, as, according to the legend, she did at birth
- l 14 *Long-leg* a fielder on the boundary behind the batsman, slightly to leg
- l 15 *Bye* a run made upon a missed ball
- l 17 *Gaffer* old man
- l 23 *Ballistics* . the science of hurling missiles by the use of an engine
- P 242, l 8 *Yorker* . a ball dropping within about three or four feet of the wicket
- l 22 *Travesty* parody
- P 243, l 26 *Pomeranian* belonging to Pomerania, a state in the north of Germany
- P 244, l 3 *Gravelotte* a battle in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the French were heavily defeated and took refuge in Metz
- l 7 *Titanic* immense
- l 23 *Tussock* a tuft of grass
- l 35 *Banshee* an Irish fairy attached to a house or family

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1 *The Argonauts* Write a short character-sketch of (a) Jason, (b) Medeira, (c) Aietes, (d) Idas Illustrate from incidents in the story

2 *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Suppose Orpheus, not Eurydice, had died Tell how she went to the under-world and tried to bring Orpheus back to earth

3 *Ulysses and the Cyclops* Read Lamb's "Adventures of Ulysses," and describe any other exploit of Ulysses

Tell another story to illustrate the triumph of cunning over strength. e g Jacob and Esau, "The Valiant Little Tailor" (Grimm)

Relate, or invent, another story introducing a giant

4 *The Death of Baldur* Describe the scene at the building of Baldur's funeral pyre, and the launching of the ship

5 *Excalibur* Relate a real or imaginary exploit in which Arthur used Excalibur, or an exploit of one of the Knights of the Round Table

6 *Death and the Ruffians* Write this story in the form of a play The scene will be laid near, and at, the treasure

7 *The Devil and St Dunstan* Tell how St. Dunstan outwitted a thief

8 *Escape from School* Suppose that the headmaster opened the door Complete the story.

9 *Schooldays* Tell how you were gulled by an older boy or girl, or relate a practical joke you have played

10 *Schooldays of Thomas Edwards* Edwards brings into school a mouse, a parrot, or a wasps' nest

11 *Tom Tulliver at School*. Give Maggie's story of her stay at Stelling's

12 *Charwoman and Office-boy* Write a character-sketch of Miss Matfield as you imagine her.

Write a dialogue between Miss Matfield and Mrs Cross
The office-boy does a piece of "shadderin' "

13 *First Day at Randell's* Describe your first day at a new school

FACT AND FICTION

14 *A Tight Corner* Describe an adventure with wolves, or among tribesmen

15 *The Siege of Alesia.* Draw a rough sketch-map to illustrate this extract

Write the letter Vercingetorix sent out to the tribes, or the report of the siege sent to Rome by Caesar

16. "'Twas there that we parted——" Imagine that Ewen and Cameron escaped from the hut Describe how they did so

17 *The Defence of the Fort* Describe a British attack on an Indian fort, or any adventure with Indians

18 *We escape* Describe an imaginary escape from prison, or any famous escape you have heard or read of

19 *The Duel* Discuss the advantages of being left-handed

20. *The Defence of the Cottage* Describe any other exploit of Robin Hood, e g. his encounter with the Sheriff of Nottingham

21. *At Bay in the Inn* Describe the scene and the discussion in the kitchen of the inn

22 *Robbed* Describe your own loss of something you valued highly

23 *A Desperate Chase* Write a newspaper account, with headlines, of the scene in the church, and of the fight between John Ridd and Carver Doone

24 *Aeneas-of-the-Pistol* Describe an adventure in a rowing-boat

25 *Mr Polly to the Rescue* Describe a rescue from a burning building

Give the old lady's account of the incident, as she told it to her friends

26. *Peter stays out* Describe a boxing-match

27 *Sparrows on the Housetops.* Continue the story, showing how the captives escaped from the city

Write Blenkiron's letter home, describing the escape

28 *Breaking Wild Horses* Tell a story of the ranches

Write a description of the training of any animal

29 *Blubber* "There she blows!" Describe the chase and capture of a whale

30 *Hunting in the Amazon Forest* Describe a fox-hunt, or a day's hunting in the African jungle

31 *Three Wonders* Describe a conjurer you have seen

32 *The Burnous* "The Arab criticises English dress"

33 *McEwen and the Eagle* Describe McEwen's similar adventure with a weasel

ESSAY QUESTIONS

34. *Bull-fighting* Write a story entitled "Chased by a Bull"

35. *Sfax*. Describe in a similar way your native town, as if you were visiting it for the first time

36. *Whang the Miller* Suppose Whang had really discovered gold. Continue the story

37. *Handy Andy* Describe one of Handy Andy's exploits later in the day, e.g. when waiting on the squire at dinner

38. *The Stuffed Trout*. Write a story entitled "When I was in America," or "When I was in the Navy"

39. *A Strange Story* Write the story of a modern Rip Van Winkle

40. *The Burglars* Write Harold's story of a real burglary at the house

41. *The Crockman* Write a speech supposed to be made by a salesman or a stump-orator

42. *The Family Car* Tell the story of the family bicycle or aeroplane

43. *The Cricket Match* Describe the end of the match or the innings of the Fordenden team

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